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Herbert Clayton: The Career and Death of a Peterborough "Theatrical Man" in the 1910s ...Robert Clarke	3
J. J. Hartley's Diary of his Visit to American Cities .....	J. J. Hartley, 1920 17
J. J. Hartley was a busy contractor .....	Elwood H. Jones, 2009 18
Old Houses to Disappear With Widening of George Street .....	Peterborough Examiner 1939 20
Remembering Andre Dorfman .....	Elwood H. Jones 21
Trent Valley Archives Stoney Lake Historic Puzzles .....	23
Charlie Brennan Gained Circus Fame in States: Forerunner to [Will] Rogers .....	Examiner, 1936 24
Ivan O'Beirne .....	Elwood H. Jones 26
Julian's Landing 1876 .....	Henry Speid 27
Peyton Shewen was Sam Slocum .....	Elwood H. Jones 30
Lime Juice Club fonds, 1886-1910 .....	PMA City Archives 31
Robert W. R. Grubbe .....	Examiner 1923 and commentary 32
News Views and Reviews	
Moving the House on Monaghan .....	Ruth Thompson 35
Harry Holbrook's Great War Adventure .....	Michael C. Doran 37
TVA Zoom Presentations .....	36
Queries .....	41
Pte. M. Massala; William Irwin; Research Room stories	
Peterborough Lawn Bowlers 1906 .....	Morning Times, 1906 42
Peterborough Lawn Bowling Project 44	

*Cover photo: Haselbrae Lodge, Grubbe's Island, Upper Stoney Lake (TVA Grubbe fonds)*



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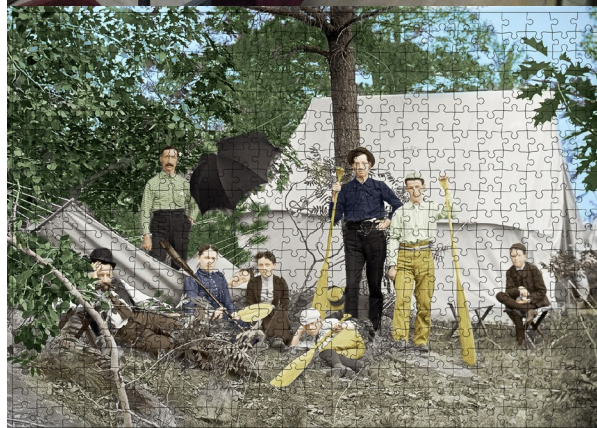
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## Herbert Clayton: The Career and Death of a Peterborough “Theatrical Man” in the 1910s

Robert Clarke

*“Local theatre-goers will no doubt see a big improvement to the Princess Theatre now under the capable management of Mr. H. Clayton, who now retains full control and management of the three local picture and vaudeville houses in this city.” – “The Princess Theatre Purchased by Moving Picture Magnate,” Peterborough Daily Evening Review, Oct. 21, 1913, p.1*

In 1912 a young man named Herbert Clayton arrived in Peterborough to take up management of the new Red Mill Theatre. He quickly made his presence felt, and within a year or so, not satisfied with running just one motion picture house, he had also taken over both the long-running Royal Theatre and, soon after that, the Princess.

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For most of the 1910s, downtown Peterborough was an entertainment hotbed. As of 1914 the city had four small theatres dedicated to motion pictures – with live music and vaudeville performances too. It also had a huge venue for live performances: the Grand Opera House, seating 1,500 – which screened the blockbuster silent pictures of the time such as *The Last Days of Pompeii* (Italy, 1913) and *Birth of a Nation* (U.S., 1915).

The main drag running north and south, George Street (still dirt in 1912, but not for much longer), was a bustling place day and evening. All sorts of persons wandered around, whether busy or with a little time on their hands – women and men and children, store and office employees, people shopping, looking for work – a few coins in their pockets, poking about to see what was happening. A spring 1915 news item referred to “the gay white way effect of Peterborough’s main street” — using a term once applied to New York’s Broadway and the bright illumination of its rows of theatres.<sup>1</sup>

The pedestrians had to watch out for cyclists, horse-drawn drays, streetcars, or the new-fangled autos – in 1914 there were two hundred automobiles in the city, about one for every hundred people.<sup>2</sup> With the prevalence of horses, those strolling about also had to carefully watch where they stepped.

Walter Noyes, who worked in the downtown theatres from the 1900s to the 1960s, recalled that when he started out, “The Royal and the Tiz-It used to play the same vaudeville acts and the players with make-up still on went from one show to the other by carriage and horses.”<sup>3</sup>

By 1915 the theatre scene revolved around four men who came from quite different walks of life:

- business man and factory owner J.J. Turner Sr., who with his sons owned and managed the Grand Opera House at 284 George Street (immediately beside the Turner Building);
- tobacco merchant Mike Pappas (or Mehail Pappakeriazes), who built the Royal Theatre at 344–348 George in 1908 and at one time or another had his fingers in two others;
- local veterinarian Dr. Fred L. Robinson, who owned the Empire Theatre at 224 Charlotte, just east of Aylmer;
- and Herbert Clayton, a relative newcomer who for a short while simultaneously ran three of Peterborough’s four motion picture theatres.

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For some time after arriving in town in early 1912 at the age of twenty-six, Herbert Clayton appeared to be thriving – an exemplar of just how to build a business on the local scene. By May he had secured a ten-year lease to manage what had been called “the Crystal” – now renamed the Red Mill Theatre – at 408 George Street. As a newcomer he had quickly won the city’s confidence and earned its approval. At the time Peterborough’s *Evening Examiner* declared that the new man was favourably “impressed with the progressiveness of the city and intends to remain here. He believes Peterborough to be one of the best towns he has ever been to.”<sup>4</sup>

Clayton had just left the employ of theatre owners L.J. Applegath and Sons of Toronto, and the *Daily*

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<sup>1</sup> “Inviting Entrance to Tiz-It Theatre,” *Review*, March 16, 1915, p.8.

<sup>2</sup> “Two Hundred Automobiles in Peterboro,” *Examiner*, April 24, 1914, p.16.

<sup>3</sup> Earl Lowes, “Began Work in Peterborough 48 Years Ago: Doorman Recalls Life in Theatre,” *Examiner*, Oct. 15, 1960, p.18.

<sup>4</sup> “Ten Year Lease of Red Mill Theatre,” *Examiner*, May 15, 1912, p.11.

*Evening Review* assured its readers that “during his six years service with that company,” he “has never failed in this line of work.” He would surely fit quite nicely into this highly controlled city space. The theatre under his ownership would do “nothing to offend the most refined taste.”<sup>5</sup>

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Herbert Clayton, born in Chequerbent, near Bolton, Greater Lancashire, in England on December 12, 1885, had immigrated to Canada while still a young man, making his way to Toronto. Family lore has it that early on he worked as a “strongman” in vaudeville – and, indeed, in 1907 he identified himself as a “gymnast.”<sup>6</sup> In that regard, later on in the Great War he was assigned to the Canadian overseas force’s gymnastic unit as an instructor. The strongman/gymnast/vaudeville sphere could explain multiple tattoos later identified in his army record as “distinguishing marks”: “Tattoo: left arm, Eleanor – woman & fan. Lt. forearm – snake on palm – lady – clasped hands. Breast – sister’s picture, clasped hands. Rt. Arm – Buffalo Bill. Rt. Forearm – Cross ‘In memory of my mother,’ two lilies etc.”<sup>7</sup>

In Toronto Clayton may also have worked short periods as a carpenter and a “helper” at the Otis-Fensom Elevator Co. before finding his niche in 1907–8 with a job as an usher at the Crystal Palace theatre at 141 Yonge St. In any case he soon met up with Florence McNabb, who was employed at Eaton’s department store, not far from the Crystal Palace.<sup>8</sup> (Perhaps Herbert showed her to a seat one day.)

Born in Ontario in July 17, 1887, Florence had come to the big city from Stayner, a town just below Lake Simcoe (about 10 kilometres north of the village of Creemore). Her father, Archibald

(“Archie”) McNabb, an agent for an agricultural manufacturing company, died in 1891, leaving her mother, Margaret (called “Maggie”), to take care of three children: Ellen (born 1886), Florence, and John Archibald (born 1891).<sup>9</sup>

In 1906–7 Florence was employed as a “finisher” at the T. Eaton Co. – and at the same time her brother, John A. McNabb, was working right across the street doing display work and window trimming at the Robert Simpson department store.<sup>10</sup>

Herbert and Florence were married in Toronto on Sept. 4, 1907 (and Herbert was identifying his occupation on the marriage certificate as “gymnast”).<sup>11</sup> After that they lived at 105 William Street in the long-gone downtown area known as “The Ward,” and it was around that time that Herbert found his niche. By 1908, still only twenty-

<sup>5</sup> “Red Mill Theatre,” *Review*, Feb. 12, 1912, p.4.

<sup>6</sup> Phone conversation with Dr. Kent Clayton, Mill Bay, B.C., Aug. 14, 2017; marriage record, Ontario, no.2478, registered Sept. 18, 1907, Herbert Clayton and Florence McNabb, Ancestry.ca. The military record has both Bolton, Lanc., and Bolton, Yorkshire; but it seems the correct place of birth is Lancashire.

<sup>7</sup> Library and Archives Canada (LAC), Personnel Records of the First World War, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1779-52, Item no. 104739 B1779-S052 <<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=104739>>.

<sup>8</sup> Toronto city directories, 1905 and 1906, list a sole Herbert Clayton, rooming at 68 Dundas St. as a carpenter; the 1907 edition identifies a Herbert Clayton, same address, as a “helper” at the Otis-Fensom Elevator Co; the 1908 edition has Herbert Clayton, 105 William, working at the Crystal Palace Theatre, which would seem to be the same person. *Toronto City Directory*, 1905, p.392, 1906, p.411, 1907, p.424, 1908, p.364. For Miss Florence McNabb, *Toronto City Directory*, 1906, p.720.

<sup>9</sup> Canada Census, 1891 and 1901, for information about the family; 1893 death notice, Ellen McNabb. The Canada census for 1891 indicates that the family (except John, not yet born) was living in Toronto, St. Stephen’s Ward. Daughter Ellen Ann, b.1886, died of typhoid fever in 1893. In 1891 Archie, age 32 (born about 1859), was an agent for an agricultural manufacturing concern; he died in 1891, and the family was back in Stayner by the time of Ellen’s death. In 1891 mother Margaret was age 28.

<sup>10</sup> *Toronto City Directory*, 1906, p.730.

<sup>11</sup> Marriage record, Ontario, no.2478, registered Sept. 18, 1907, Herbert Clayton and Florence McNabb, Ancestry.ca.



three years old, he had his job as usher at the Crystal Palace, opened in 1907 by the Applegaths.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps he had been with the Crystal Palace from its beginning.

L.J. Applegath and Sons, who started in the hat business, went into the new phenomenon of motion pictures in a big way, not just opening theatres but also introducing one of the early film exchanges – another new enterprise that took advantage of the growing number of theatres in the province, all of them crying out for more and more pictures.<sup>13</sup>

Clayton must have impressed the owners because by 1909–10 he was manager of the Applegaths' Crystal Palace Theatre at 27 King St. East in Hamilton. Florence filled in as treasurer of the theatre. The couple lived about 10 kilometres south of Hamilton in Caledonia Village, Haldimand District, attending the Anglican Church there. When the 1911 census taker came around, Clayton identified his occupation as “manager, moving pictures” — which was an extremely upstart identification for that time, with motion picture theatres in Ontario less than a half-decade old and more disparaged than praised. Herbert and Florence were joined by an adopted son, John W., who was born April 10, 1911.<sup>14</sup>

By early 1912 the Clayton family had made the move to Peterborough — and Florence's mother, Margaret, and brother, John A. McNabb, who had been living together in shared lodgings in downtown Toronto, moved there as well. The move to Peterborough was a family affair.

In Peterborough John McNabb worked as a window trimmer with the Richard Hall & Son clothing and home furnishings store, moving quickly up to advertising manager. He went off to war in 1916 but returned to Canada a year later, getting his discharge due to health issues. He returned to the Richard Hall store, but by 1921 he had started up his own dress shop, La Mode. A year later he established a larger store, J.A. McNabb Co., Ladies' Wear. By 1923 John owned a chain of clothing stores in Peterborough, Belleville, Kingston, and Brockville. He became a prominent Peterborough business man (serving on both the city council and Board of Education) before leaving in the 1930s to live in London, Ont., and then Brantford.<sup>15</sup>

For his brother-in-law Herbert Clayton, the move to Peterborough in 1912 was a logical step. Clayton would probably have learned a little about the city's theatre scene in his work with the Applegaths. Peterborough's Mike Pappas had visited Toronto's Crystal Palace Theatre and the Applegath exchange to seek out the latest films and vaudeville acts for his Peterborough concerns. It was at the Crystal Palace in the summer of 1910 that Pappas had spotted the musicians Agnes and Eveline Fenwick (the latter known as “Mrs. Foster”) and brought them to Peterborough, for life.<sup>16</sup> Perhaps Herbert Clayton had recognized the possibilities of Peterborough as a place to set up on his own. He might well have been financially backed in the shift by the Applegaths; such things were most often not made public. He might also have received financial help from his mother-in-law, Margaret McNabb.

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In his mid- to late twenties Clayton was a self-composed, forceful-looking, wiry man of about average height for the times, at five-foot-seven (and weighing around 135 pounds). Even if he kept his strongman arms and tattoos well covered, a glance at his face and steely blue eyes might have delivered a quick message: here was a man of substance, someone to be reckoned with. “I have the impression,” his grandson Kent Clayton told me “that he was a bit of a wheeler-dealer.” As the *Morning Times* would point out, he was also a man who could lose his temper when things appeared to be going against him.<sup>17</sup>

His first Peterborough theatre, the Red Mill, was a dynamic enterprise. Friendly and go-getting, Clayton

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<sup>12</sup> *Toronto City Directory*, 1908, p.464.

<sup>13</sup> *Toronto City Directory*, 1908, p.464, lists Herbert Clayton as “usher” for L.J. Applegath and Sons. Applegath operated the Crystal Palace motion picture theatre on Yonge Street in Toronto from as early as 1907. For the Applegaths see also Paul S. Moore, *Now Playing: Early Moviegoing and the Regulation of Fun* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), p.93; Paul S. Moore, “Movie Palaces on Canadian Downtown Main Streets: Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver,” *Urban History Review/Revue d'histoire urbaine*, vol.32, no.2 (2004), p.6.

<sup>14</sup> *Hamilton City Directory*, 1910, pp.17, 276, and 1911, p.260; “Rosters of Hamilton, Ont., Theatres,” *Billboard*, Dec. 10, 1910, p.53 (lists Florence as treasurer and seven other employees); Feb. 12, 1910, p.53; Sept. 24, 1910, p.57; Oct. 1, 1910, p.68. According to a later report, Clayton worked six years for the Applegaths, including spending a bit of time in Montreal: “Ten Year Lease of Red Mill Theatre,” *Examiner*, May 15, 1912, p.11.

<sup>15</sup> “John A. McNabb Passes Away in Brantford,” *Examiner*, June 17, 1940, p.17; Peterborough city directories.

<sup>16</sup> See Princess ad, *Examiner*, Sept. 17, 1910, p.1, for the introduction of “Miss Fenwick, Violinist” (Mrs. Eveline Foster) to Peterborough; see also “The Long and Splendid Musical Era of Mrs. Eveline Mary Foster,”

<https://www.peterboroughmoviehistory.com/other-writing-2/the-long-and-splendid-musical-era-of-mrs-eveline-mary-foster>.

<sup>17</sup> Conversation with Dr. Kent Clayton, Oct. 11, 2017; “He Loses His Temper,” *Morning Times*, May 8, 1912, p.5.

quickly became a well-known figure in town – front and centre in his publicity efforts. Day after day he made the usual claims about “securing” the best and most expensive films and acts possible. “Manager Clayton,” said a typical pronouncement, “will show the public of this City the greatest feature in motion pictures to-morrow and Saturday.” Or: “Manager Clayton has secured for next week the late and great Italian War, in 4,000 feet, four reels. This will be the greatest attraction in the motion picture history. Don’t miss it.”<sup>18</sup>



Outside the Red Mill Theatre, April 1912. Of the two men in the middle, the theatre owner/manager Herbert Clayton is on the left. The other two, one kneeling and the other standing, were theatre employees. The passersby seem quite curious about it all. This photo appeared in the *Peterborough Evening Examiner*, April 1, 1912, with the caption: “THE POPULAR HIGH-CLASS PICTURE PALACE, George St. Big Attractions All This Week. Don’t Fail to Hear D’ANGELO The Great Italian Singer. Special Big Show for Ladies every afternoon.” Peterborough Museum and Archives (PMA), VR 7918-1.

He was not afraid of making big (if dubious) claims, as he did in the case of the three-reel western *War on the Plains* (1912, starring Francis Coppola): “It is being shown for the first time in Ontario in Peterborough.”<sup>19</sup> Another time it was: “Never in the history of motion pictures has a better programme been secured for its patrons than the management of the Red Mill has booked for Friday and Saturday.”<sup>20</sup> In the case of the forgettable film *Through Dante’s Flames* (U.S., 1914), he was showing “what is said to be the most wonderful portrayal of a train wreck in the record of filmdom.”<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> “Red Mill Theatre,” *Examiner*, Nov. 7, 1912, p.7; “Big Attractions for Red Mill,” *Examiner*, Nov. 23, 1912, p.20.

<sup>19</sup> “A Great Film,” *Examiner*, April 18, 1914, p.7.

<sup>20</sup> “Extra! Extra! Extra! Red Mill Theatre,” *Examiner*, March 21, 1912, p.7.

<sup>21</sup> “Great Pictures at Red Mill,” *Examiner*, Oct. 7, 1914, p.7. According to a review in *Motion Picture News*, May 9, 1914, the





Clayton in the doorway of the Red Mill Theatre, April 1912. This is a detail from a [larger photo](#). Balsillie Collection of Roy Studio Images, PMA, VR 7918-2.

With the coming of the First World War Clayton offered “1,000 feet of authentic War Pictures, depicting scenes that actually have happened and are happening at the present day on the battle field” – a statement that, at the time, was far from the truth.<sup>22</sup> In the days before film critics, the newspapers would print more or less verbatim the copy that theatre managers submitted to them. “Manager Clayton is to be congratulated . . .” said one item – with Clayton more or less congratulating himself.<sup>23</sup>

Sometimes the promotional copy as issued by the paper resulted in a mix up of voice, as in this shift from third person to first: Owing to the large number that could not gain admittance at least night’s performance, **Mr. Clayton will show** this splendid feature at 7, 8:30 and 10 o’clock to-night. **I have run** some wonderful features, but this is the daddy of all detective pictures on the market to-day.<sup>24</sup>

Superlatives have always been the bread and butter of exhibition publicity, but Clayton was not above stretching the truth in other ways. “I have made a business of attracting the public to shows for 10 years,” he said in an ad in April 1912; ten years earlier, in 1902, he would have been fifteen years old.<sup>25</sup>

Clayton was innovative, not afraid to take risks. To encourage the growth of audience he quickly introduced what were called “day-light” pictures – the films could be projected with the lights on, alleviating anxieties (it was thought) of women and others who might be concerned about the social composition of the film audience – while also allowing the theatre to be more open to the air in summertime.<sup>26</sup> The films, he said, “will prove to be the clearest and brightest and steadiest in the city.”<sup>27</sup>

In April 1912, when he screened what he touted as “the beginning of a new departure in the moving picture business in this city,” for once the claim had a ring of truth. It was a 3,000-foot film (more than an hour long, unusual amidst the usual supply of short pictures): *Nick Carter in Paris* (perhaps a copy of a French film made 1909–10), with action taking place in the streets of Paris – and, supposedly, “a strong moral lesson.” It had just been screened for three weeks at a Yonge Street theatre in Toronto. Newspaper publicity (undoubtedly supplied by the manager himself) declared it to be “only a mark of the progress and thoughtfulness of Mr. Clayton.”<sup>28</sup>

*Nick Carter* would be followed by something referred to as *Dealers in White Women*. According to the *Examiner* (in copy undoubtedly supplied by Clayton) it was an exposé of the “white slave” traffic, a fairly popular

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train wreck was “admirably shown on the screen.”

<sup>22</sup> “Big Attraction for Red Mill Theatre,” *Examiner*, Oct. 30, 1914, p.9.

<sup>23</sup> “The Attraction of the Season,” *Examiner*, Oct. 31, 1914, p.7.

<sup>24</sup> “\$200,000 Photo Play at the New Tiz-It Theatre,” *Examiner*, April 15, 1915, p.5; emphasis added.

<sup>25</sup> Red Mill ad, *Examiner*, April 6, 1912, p.1.

<sup>26</sup> Elsa Marshall, “Silent Film Music Research as Local Musicology: A Case Study of Musical Practices and Networks in Ottawa Theatres from 1897 to 1929,” M.A. thesis, School of Music, Faculty of Arts, University of Ottawa, 2017.

<sup>27</sup> “Attraction Extraordinary at Red Mill Theatre,” *Examiner*, Feb. 28, 1912, p.1; “Improvements at Red Mill,” *Examiner*, May 22, 1912, p.7, mentions front and rear doors could be left open during warm weather, “ensuring ventilation.” There is no indication as to how long this experiment continued.

<sup>28</sup> “‘Dealers in White Women,’” *Examiner*, April 25, 1912, p.1.

subject of the first two decades of the century; in this case the work of art was supposedly given sanction by clergymen in England, the United States, and Canada.

At 27,000 feet, *Dealers* had another distinction: it was a serial attraction, to be presented in installments, just like the serial stories that newspaper readers were already so familiar with. “To get the good out of the whole story you must begin with the first pictures on Monday or Tuesday” and continue to follow the action from there. “This is something Peterborough people have never had the opportunity of seeing. It is a real drama in picture form, and having seen one section no one will miss the others.”<sup>29</sup> The genre represented a strategy calculated to capture regular audiences – and was an early example of the serials that would dominate the theatres in the decade and provide filler for years to come. In another twist, the theatre announced plans to open at 9 a.m. and run until 11:00 – and it would have a special matinee for “ladies” in the afternoon.

Clayton made much of his support for workers and running “a strictly and absolutely union theatre.” He screened labour-friendly films and hired union “operators” (or projectionists). He complained when members of the Film Committee of the local branch of the International Typographical Union local brought in an educational picture, *A Curable Disease*, about tuberculosis, but chose his opposition – Mike Pappas’s *Royal* – for its screening. While congratulating the “printers of Peterborough” for managing to secure the film, he went on to “respectfully submit that some little disregard to union principles was displayed” by the members. “Why did not these splendid fighters for union principles choose a union picture house to display that film?” Clayton boasted that he employed “nothing but union musicians and operators” and paid “the union scale of wages.” To which the unionists offered a generous apology. They replied that, having received many “courtesies” from Clayton, they had indeed wanted to use his theatre for the picture – but the *Royal* had simply gone ahead and scheduled the film before all the details were settled. “On us, therefore,” the union members said, “the blame, if any.”<sup>30</sup>

The Red Mill offered the usual array of vaudeville acts and music to accompany the silent films, with illustrated songs (at first) and singers and performers coming and going. It advertised music as “its special feature.”<sup>31</sup> It had its regular band (usually a trio) to accompany the films. “The Red Mill Orchestra,” he boasted, “under the direction of Mrs. Foster, is of a high order of excellence, both from a classical and popular standpoint.”

In early April, for instance, the theatre served up the Italian tenor R.M. D’Angelo and brought in Miss Gertrude Ogden (“direct from New York City”), among many others. One of the regular “news items” supplied by the manager and faithfully published by the *Examiner* declared: “The Red Mill Picture Palace seems to grow more in popular favour each week, and the cream of Peterborough’s society and business folk are nightly represented in this delightful place [of] amusement.”<sup>32</sup> Clayton, the *Morning Times* stated, “seems, to use an English expression, to ‘ave a haye like a beagle’ for good vaudeville attractions.”<sup>33</sup>

Clayton may even have proved a little too successful at drawing audiences. In the following months the audiences were so large that overcrowding became an issue.<sup>34</sup> The *Morning Times* – one of the city’s three dailies at the time – went on a bit of a crusade against what the editor considered to be chaotic and dangerous conditions at the theatre. It was a time filled with serious concerns about the highly inflammable film being used, and the all too real possibilities of fires breaking out and crowds not being able to get out safely. In May word went around that the *Morning Times* was going to publish a critical item about unmanageable crowds at the Red Mill. Witnesses had seen the lobby packed to bursting and people jamming the aisles while the films were playing (forbidden by law).

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<sup>29</sup> “‘Dealers in White Women,’” *Examiner*, April 25, 1912, p.1. Ads for *Dealers in White Women* appeared daily in late April and early May 1912. I have not yet been able to track down this title. It may have been based on a 1904 Broadway play, *Dangers of Working Girls, or Dealers in White Women*.

<sup>30</sup> “Why Not at the Red Mill?” letter to the editor, *Examiner*, Feb. 13, 1912, p.7; “A Reply from Film Committee,” *Examiner*, Feb. 15, 1913, p.7; ad, *Examiner*, Feb. 13, 1913, p.1. *A Curable Disease* (U.S., Edison, October 1912) was described as “a story of the Union Printers home, Colorado Springs, Col. 1,000 feet Dramatic”; Edison ad, *MPW*, Oct. 5, 1912, p.16. The *Examiner* ad stated: “A story of the ‘White Plague’ and how it is treated in the Union Printer’s Home in Colorado Springs.” The union signatories to the letter were George J. Johnson and A. Hamon. The original letter of complaint to the editor was unsigned, but obviously came from Clayton; the union letter writers addressed their apology to the “anonymous correspondent” but directly referred to Clayton.

<sup>31</sup> “The Red Mill Theatre,” *Examiner*, March 22, 19012, p.7.

<sup>32</sup> “Special Songs by the Great Italian Singer D’Angelo, at the Red Mill Theatre,” *Examiner*, April 3, 1912, p.7.

<sup>33</sup> “An Operatic Star Here,” *Morning Times*, Jan. 29, 1914, p.8. It is difficult to tell whether the “news” – and therefore the expressions used – in the dailies came from the papers’ staff writers or were the result of the theatre managers’ self-promoting press releases. I wonder whether this should have been “haye like an eagle” rather than beagle, but that is the expression that the paper printed.

<sup>34</sup> “Moving Picture Theatre Proprietors Each Fined \$50,” *Review*, March 26, 1912, p.4; “Heavy Fines Meted out in This Morning’s Police Court,” *Examiner*, March 26, 1912, p.7; “Overcrowding Public Places,” *Morning Times*, April 2, 1912, p.6.



Hearing of this, Clayton showed up at the paper's offices "in a wrathful mood." The morning's headline: "He Loses His Temper."<sup>35</sup>

In late February of the following year Police Chief Daniel Thompson laid a charge against Clayton for allowing the passageways and approaches to the picture show to become blocked (although, the police noted, the aisles of the theatre were clear). The manager was fined \$50 for the offence.<sup>36</sup> Another time he offered an apology to "parents of the hundreds of children to whom he had to refuse admission on New Year's Day, because they were not accompanied by an adult." (The provincial law prevented proprietors from permitting children to enter unless accompanied by parents or some other adult.)<sup>37</sup> At least once he had to pay a hefty fine for admitting unaccompanied children.<sup>38</sup>

Clayton had clearly made his presence known, and by the summer of 1912 he was also managing the Princess, just across the road. In October 1913 he bought rights to the theatre outright.<sup>39</sup> Under Clayton the Princess took a slightly different tack, appealing to potential male patrons: "Will you appreciate the efforts of your wife on that dinner, to-day. Then show it by taking her to the Princess Theatre." People who came to the Princess would "see a cleaner and more affordable hour. You'll be treated right! Only a nickel but worth a quarter."<sup>40</sup>

Clayton was doing so well that he also reached an agreement with Pappas to assume control of the Royal. In announcing his takeover of that theatre in January 1913, the *Examiner* noted that Clayton "intends to make considerable improvements" – one of which involved plans to include a gallery that would seat 500 people (which never seems to have come about).<sup>41</sup> He was the first off the mark to bring in Thomas Edison's Kinetophone attraction – rudimentary talking pictures – exhibiting the pictures a full seven months before they made a big splash at the Grand Opera House.<sup>42</sup>

Clayton's little empire on the main street now included all three motion picture theatres.<sup>43</sup> In January 1914 the *Examiner* reported that he was showing 65 reels of film a week at his three theatres, with the Red Mill screening British pictures; the Princess devoting itself to the releases of the Mutual Film Corporation (distributors of the Keystone Kops films and, for a while, Charlie Chaplin), with its independent films; and the Royal showing "the cream of the licensed films."<sup>44</sup> Big audiences continued to turn out. One evening in February, a paper reported: "George street, for many feet north of the Royal Theatre, was crowded with people waiting to enter that popular place of entertainment."<sup>45</sup>

Clayton and Pappas were business partners of a sort, though eventually they would have a falling out. Together in late 1913 or early 1914 they made an attempt to open up yet another theatre, this time in Lindsay. They applied to the Lindsay town council for a license to establish what would be the town's third motion picture house. The council proved reluctant to accept the request because of the competition that would be created for that city's first two theatres, with some worry, too, about the money going "out of town."<sup>46</sup> While the plans for Lindsay did not

<sup>35</sup> "He Loses His Temper," *Morning Times*, May 8, 1912, p.5.

<sup>36</sup> "Charge Against Picture Show," *Examiner*, Feb. 25, 1913, p.7; "Mgr. of Red Mill Is Fined \$50," *Examiner*, Feb. 28, 1913, np. Clayton thought of appealing the fine – in a similar case a charge against the manager of the Royal was dismissed – but later decided not to take that action. "Will Not Appeal Red Mill Case," *Examiner*, March 13, 1913, p.11.

<sup>37</sup> "Could Not Admit Children Alone," *Review*, Jan. 8, 1913, p.8.

<sup>38</sup> "Motion Picture Proprietor Was Fined \$100.00," *Examiner*, March 12, 1914, p.7.

<sup>39</sup> His management of the Princess under owners Sanderson and, later, Roland Glover is mentioned in "Bruin with Roller Skates," *Review*, Sept. 11, 1912, p.5; "Local News Items," *Review*, Oct. 15, 1912, p.4; "Soanes Family Coming Next Week," *Review*, Nov. 12, 1912, p.5; "Strong Features," *Review*, Dec. 14, 1912, p.8. For ownership, "The Princess Theatre Purchased by Moving Picture Magnite" [*sic*], *Review*, Oct. 16, 1913, p.1. (The same article was repeated Oct. 17, 18, 21, 1913, with "Magnite" corrected to "Magnate.")

<sup>40</sup> Ad, *Examiner*, June 13, 1913, p.1.

<sup>41</sup> "Has Changed Hands," *Examiner*, Feb. 20, 1913, p.7. A report on the 1915 case of "Pappas v. Clayton" stated that the lease giving Clayton control of the Royal was signed in January 1913: "Alleged Terms of the Lease Were Violated," *Review*, March 6, 1915, p.1.

<sup>42</sup> Ad, and "Talking Pictures at the Royal," *Examiner*, June 25, 1913, pp.1, 7. Clayton placed the same ad on page 1 for several days, with no other pictures listed. Edison's Kinetophone at the Grand Opera House: ad, *Examiner*, Jan. 24, 1914, p.9.

<sup>43</sup> "Princess Theatre in New Hands," *Examiner*, May 16, 1913, p.7. See also "British Films at the Red Mill," *Examiner*, Jan. 8, 1914, p.7, with the sub-headline "Manager Clayton Shows Sixty-Five Reels a Week at His Three Theatres." According to the article "Peterborough Always Had Plenty of Amusements," *Examiner*, July 3, 1929, p.12, in speaking of Clayton, the Red Mill, and the Princess, "one of the Chinese residents of the city also had a hand in the game."

<sup>44</sup> "British Films at the Red Mill," *Examiner*, Jan. 8, 1914, p.7.

<sup>45</sup> "City in Paragraphs," *Morning Times*, Feb. 10, 1914, p.8.

<sup>46</sup> "Messrs. Pappas and Clayton Open Picture House in Lindsay," *Examiner*, Dec. 19, 1913, p.13; "Can Council Refuse License?"

work out, a report indicated that Clayton had bought a theatre in Hamilton, and he may have owned or managed one in Brantford as well. At another point shortly after that, rumours spread about Pappas and Clayton setting up yet another theatre on George St. capable of seating 500 people, but that also did not happen.<sup>47</sup>

Clayton, like purposeful managers everywhere, took care to fashion ties with the community. During the early months of the Great War he contributed theatre proceeds to war causes. A committee of the Trades and Labour Council got a day's take — the sum of \$5 (representing a lot of nickels and dimes) — which was in turn handed over to the Daughters of the Empire "for patriotic purposes." He put his gymnast background to use working as physical director (or trainer) for the city's main hockey club. He "is a demonstrator of physical culture," said the *Review*, "and has had considerable experience along this line."<sup>48</sup> He "donated" a couple of his vaudeville performers to take part in the program of a 57th Regiment "smoker."<sup>49</sup> Working with the W. Lech and Sons store he arranged a "Hat Contest" for his theatre, with the store providing the prize for a "lucky winner" at one of his shows. He also arranged to give "a purse of silver" to the best amateur performer in his city.<sup>50</sup>

But something went wrong. He might have badly overextended himself, with his fingers in too many pies. In addition to paying for renovations he had to cover expenses, licenses, and property taxes on three theatre properties.<sup>51</sup> He spent \$2,500 alone on a lavish "musical instrument" (some kind of organ) for the Royal, and purchased two of the finest projectors available.<sup>52</sup> "The Royal," noted the *Review*, "will be one of the few strictly modern theatres in Canada." More than once announcements indicated that he would be expanding the Royal to a size of something like 1,000 seats, but those plans seem always to have fallen through.<sup>53</sup>

A fire at the Princess just before Christmas of 1914 proved a turning point. Clayton, as manager, was the last man in the theatre that evening and had tended as usual to the furnace and emptied the ashes in the cellar before leaving. Flames broke out shortly after he had left, around 11:15 p.m.

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The fire at the Princess occurred following a year in which Clayton had overseen renovations to the theatre, providing "all new seats" and "lots of room to be comfortable" — in other words, he had been putting a fair bit of money into the space. Although the fire was quickly brought under control and did not cause severe damage, the theatre remained closed through the Christmas season and January and most of February — representing a hefty loss of income in a peak period.

In February Clayton took out a building permit (for \$300) to make alterations, including "the closing of the Arcade and the putting in of a glass front."<sup>54</sup> He was turning the location into a new theatre and held a naming contest over a few weeks. When it reopened, now known as The Tiz-It, it was even more "handsomely fitted." A month or two later Clayton (now with a co-owner, a "Mr. Lee" of Toronto), went to the expense of putting in a new ventilation system, said to be "the first system of [its] type to be installed in any local theatre."<sup>55</sup> But Clayton was clearly in trouble financially.

The crunch came in March, when Mike Pappas took Clayton to court for violating the lease of the Royal. Clayton had fallen behind on his rent and owed Pappas the extraordinary sum of \$2,485 (in today's currency, almost

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*Lindsay Post*, Jan. 9, 1914, p.10; "Will There Be a Third Amusement House in Lindsay," *Watchman Warder* (Lindsay), Jan. 15, 1914, p.11. The council decided to set up a committee to consider a new bylaw to regulate local amusements houses, and not to issue any further licenses until after the committee had delivered its report.

<sup>47</sup> "New Moving Picture House," *Morning Times*, March 19, 1914, p.8; "New Theatre for Mr. Clayton," *Examiner*, June 19, 1914, p.11. A theatre in Brantford is from conversation with Dr. Kent Clayton, Aug. 14, 2017.

<sup>48</sup> "Hockey Players Are En Route to Championships," *Review*, Nov. 30, 1912, p.7; *Morning Times*, Dec. 2, 1912, p.8.

<sup>49</sup> "First Annual Smoker of the Peterborough Rangers," *Examiner*, Feb. 18, 1914 p.10.

<sup>50</sup> "Wonderful Attractions Wonderful," *Examiner*, Nov. 26, 1914, p.7.

<sup>51</sup> See, for instance, "Large Number of Licenses Issued Each Year by the City," *Examiner*, June 23, 1915, p.9, which indicates Clayton paying a fee (\$50) for each of the three theatres.

<sup>52</sup> "Manager Clayton Insists on Having Royal Theatre Ahead of Any Larger Cities," *Review*, Sept. 18, 1913, p.6; "\$2,500 Orchestra Instrument Arrives for Royal Theatre," *Review*, Oct. 14, 1913, p.1.

<sup>53</sup> See, for instance, "Royal Theatre to Seat 1000 People," *Review*, Nov. 1, 1913, p.1; "Royal Theatre," Dec. 18, 1913, p.7; "Royal Theatre Must Maintain the Lead," *Examiner*, Dec. 26, 1913, p.7; "Plans for New Royal," *Review*, Jan. 12, 1914, p.4.

<sup>54</sup> "City Hall Paragraphs," *Examiner*, Feb. 10, 1915, p.8.

<sup>55</sup> "New Ventilating System at Tiz-It," *Examiner*, April 6, 1915, p.5; "Fresh Air for Tiz-It," *Examiner*, April 24, 1915, p.16; "Takes Half Interest in Tiz-It," *Examiner*, March 12, 1915, p.7. Both the *Review* and *Examiner* announced that a "Mr. Lee" — identified as "a wealthy land owner, of Toronto" — had entered into partnership with Clayton. They intended to provide Peterborough with a new theatre — of 700 to 800 seats — "in the near future." But once again, as with other such plans, nothing more was heard of this.

\$54,000) – as well as \$465 (a little over \$10,000 today) to a local lawyer who had loaned him money to help secure the lease.<sup>56</sup>

On March 8 Pappas took back control of the Royal.<sup>57</sup> Clayton carried on with his other two theatres – and, again, oversaw extensive renovations and repairs to both the Red Mill and Tiz-It. In March 1915 he issued the standard promise of “a big programme” at the Red Mill, “for the admission of 5¢ to all at all times.”<sup>58</sup> At the Tiz-It, he said, he would “show first run features, comedies and war specials. If you have not visited the new theatre, do so to-night.” On Wednesday, April 14, according to Clayton, an expensive (\$200,000) photo play (*The Secret Seven*) “broke all records at the matinee and evening performances,” with a large number of potential patrons having to be turned away.

Clayton continued to put himself forward in the promotional copy he supplied to the papers. For example: “Owing to the large number that could not gain admittance at last night’s performance, Mr. Clayton will show this splendid feature [at] 7, 8:30, and 10 o’clock today. . . . This is the daddy of all detective pictures on the market to-day.”<sup>59</sup>

At the Red Mill he brought in a new serial film, *The Master Key* (1914), working out a deal with the *Examiner* to print installments of the story each Friday and Saturday. “Those who have read the first instalment of the story [in the newspaper] will of course find the pictures particularly attractive.”<sup>60</sup> In June he was making arrangements to bring in films from the Canadian Universal Films Co., a subsidiary of Universal Pictures Corp of Hollywood, for both the Red Mill and Tiz-It.<sup>61</sup>

Patrons could get an awful lot for five or ten cents at either the Red Mill or the Tiz-It — or why not go to both? The Red Mill offered unnamed (Universal) pictures amidst plenty of “big-time” vaudeville. The Tiz-It had the 11th episode of the serial *The Trey O’ Hearts* (from Universal, 1914, with four more episodes to come), but also film of the momentous opening of the Universal City studio in Hollywood, a big feature comedy-drama, and more, including Mrs. Foster’s Orchestra. An ad for *Trey O’ Hearts* promised: “This picture creates situations that will bring you to the edge of your seat. You will enjoy every second of this beautiful photo play serial.”<sup>62</sup>

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Clayton with son, John and Florence, 1915. Balsillie Collection of Roy Studio Images, PMA, Bio 15412-3.

Yet things must not have gone all that well, for in the summer of 1915 Herbert Clayton quietly abandoned his theatres. He relinquished whatever leases he had, and new managers/owners took over.

It seems, too, that patriotism was also calling. By August the country was entering its second year of what eventually became known as the First World War; and on August 18 Clayton left his home at 751 Water Street (north of what is now Parkhill) and made his way to the Armouries to enlist. He filled out the required forms, passed a physical examination (August 21), and prepared to join the 59th Battalion. He identified his trade or occupation as “theatrical man,” age twenty-nine. At some point, seemingly before he

left, he managed to have some photos taken by the Roy Studio in Peterborough.

<sup>56</sup> Converting 1915 dollars (Canadian) into 2021 dollars, Canada Inflation Calculator: <https://www.in2013dollars.com/canada/inflation/1915?amount=465>.

<sup>57</sup> “Case Is Settled,” *Evening Review*, March 8, 1915, p.8.

<sup>58</sup> “Big Vaudeville Attractions for Red Mill All Next Week,” *Examiner*, May 15, 1915, p.1. The acts would be coming from the “Big Five Circuit.”

<sup>59</sup> “\$200,000 Photo Play at the New Tiz-It Theatre,” *Examiner*, April 15, 1915, p.5.

<sup>60</sup> “Around the Theatres, Red Mill,” *Examiner*, April 20, 1915, p.10.

<sup>61</sup> “Special Photo Plays at the New Tiz-It All Next Week,” *Examiner*, June 5, 1915, p.7; “Big Attractions for Red Mill and Tiz-It Theatres All Next Week,” *Examiner*, June 12, 1915, p.7; “Jones’ Children at Red Mill All Next Week,” *Examiner*, June 26, 1915, p.7; “Something to Appreciate at the Red Mill Theatre All Next Week,” *Examiner*, June 26, 1915, p.7. CUFC was a subsidiary of the U.S. Universal Pictures Corp, distributing its products in Canada; Manjunath Pendakur, *Canadian Dreams and American Control: The Political Economy of the Canadian Film Industry* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), p.68.

<sup>62</sup> *Trey O’Hearts*: ad, *Evening Review*, March 19, 1915, p.8. The film is considered to be lost.

After a lengthy period of training in Canada, he sailed with his contingent from Halifax for Liverpool, arriving on 11 April 1916. The passage was on the *S.S. Olympic*, a large ocean liner serving as a troopship (for a time it was the largest liner in the world and was one of the ships that famously responded to the *Titanic*'s distress call in 1912).



Herbert Clayton, 1915. Balsillie Collection of Roy Studio Images, PMA, Bio 15412-1.

More months of training in England followed. Clayton got a quick promotion to sergeant and in July 1916 “proceeded to the Physical Training Course” and was shifted to the 39th Battalion. In December he was transferred to the Canadian Army Corps headquarters of the British Expeditionary Force as a physical and bayonet training instructor; his background in physical training and exercise had been recognized.<sup>63</sup>

By January 1917 he was “in the field” in France. Around that time the Canadian army “loaned” him to the 2nd Imperial Army Training School.<sup>64</sup>

In March Florence Clayton received word of her husband’s promotion to the Imperial forces as Staff Sergeant-Major and that he was “at present in the trenches” in France. Whether he did make it to the actual trenches or not is not clear; he was, as it turned out, placed in charge of the 101st Infantry Brigade bayonet fighters and physical training class.<sup>65</sup>

On 11 April 1917, two days after the beginning of the notorious Battle of Vimy Ridge, Clayton was attached to the 141 Brigade at Steenvoorde in northern France, not far from the Belgian border – specifically in the Army Gymnastics Staff (Canadian Branch) as a “Physical and Bayonet Fighting Instructor.” He was billeted in the small town of Poperinghe

(today spelled Poperinge), the centre of a large concentration of troops; as many as 250,000 troops were stationed in the area in 1917.

On April 20 Clayton died in the 5th London Field Ambulance hospital, Poperinghe, at the age of thirty-one.

The military kept rigorous records of casualties. In most cases the standard “Circumstances of Death Register” had a brief note: “Killed in Action.” In a few cases the record had explanations such as “died (influenza)” or “died of wounds (accidental)” or “previously reported wounded and missing, now for official purposes presumed to have died.” In the case of Herbert Clayton, the document, dated April 20, 1917, had a more unusual note: “‘Died’ (Self-Inflicted Wound Throat) at No. 5 London Field Ambulance.”

A Court of Inquiry was convened the very day after his death, and the testimony of six witnesses provides a glimpse of his final days and hours.

Clayton was billeted in a room above a café – an “estaminet,” witnesses called it. He shared a room with a fellow sergeant, S.H. Bridle, who testified that Clayton had looked “run down” upon his arrival in the town. When Bridle asked him if he had been “working hard,” Clayton said he had been drinking hard, “gin & Benedictines.” But, his roommate said, he seemed “rational” enough. More than one witness said they had never seen him drunk. Bridle said that he appeared quite capable of looking after himself.

The first sign of trouble occurred about a week after Clayton arrived in Poperinghe. He was in the habit of

<sup>63</sup> “Peterboro’ Boy Who Has Been Hit Twice Is Back from Front,” *Examiner*, Jan. 16, 1917, p.1; mentions Clayton being loaned to the Imperial Army.

<sup>64</sup> The information on Clayton’s army record, including the investigation into his death, is from National Archives of Canada (NAC), Personal Records of the First World War, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1779-52, Item no. 104739 B1779-S052 <<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=104739>>. See also “Peterboro’ Boy Who Has Been Hit Twice Is Back from the Front,” *Examiner*, Jan. 16, 1917, p.1, which includes a note about Clayton leaving for France to join the staff of the 2nd Imperial Army Training School.

<sup>65</sup> “Military News,” *Examiner*, March 10, 1917, p.16, “Sergt. Clayton Promoted.”



going to the estaminet every day at lunch time and again in the evening for dinner. On the evening of the 18th he turned up there as usual sometime after 6 p.m., leaving about 8 p.m. with Regimental Sergeant Major H. Chesny to have supper with him. They parted around 9:00 “on perfectly good terms with everyone.”

After that he went to pass time in the sergeant’s mess room of the 20th Battalion – and he thought he overheard people talking about him. He later told Sergeant Bridle that someone in the division was “spreading the tale” that he was a German spy. His roommate “managed to quieten him,” but on the following day Clayton remained worried about the talk “& kept referring to it!”

He was also sleeping poorly – disturbed because he thought people were walking in and out of the bedroom. He confided in his superior officers about his worries, and seemed “perfectly rational” to them. Capt. J. Betts told him “to try to forget all about it, as he thought there was nothing in it.” Clayton said he didn’t feel well enough to carry out his work and was told to report sick.

When he told Regimental Sergeant Major M. Chesney about his fears, the Sergeant told him “that to my knowledge the matter of a German spy had never been mentioned & no such accusation had been made against him.” To which Clayton had replied, “I must have been crazy.” According to Chesney, at the end of their conversation Clayton apologized, “saying he was sorry if he had put us to any inconvenience.” Chesney said that when he saw Clayton again on the evening of the 19th, “his behaviour was quite normal.”

On the morning of the 20th Clayton went to the dispensary, asking for “a tonic.” He said he did not feel ill enough to report in sick. Private Tagger of the Field Ambulance Detachment gave him “six tablets of Easton’s Syrup with written directions to take one three times a day.” In his testimony Tagger added his opinion: “The deceased did not look ill, when he came to the dispensary. There was nothing peculiar about him; he was perfectly sober.” It was the first time he had ever seen him.

Clayton told friends that he was feeling overly tired. He was sure people were going in and out of his room at night. He said he didn’t feel well enough to carry out his work. He was worried because he hadn’t received a letter from his wife in four months. But still, Clayton took part in a bayonet fighting demonstration on the afternoon of the 20th, and again his behaviour seemed “quite normal.”

Regimental Sergeant Major Chesney reported:

I next saw him on the evening of the 20th inst. He came into the Estaminet about 6:40 p.m. and left about 7:45 p.m. He told me had just been granted two days leave by the M.O. We discussed how he should spend the time. He complained of feeling tired and told me that the night before his bedroom door kept opening & closing. He also made use of the expression “I don’t think I can be sane” or words to that effect. I suggested to him that he should spend the two days in bed. He agreed and I arranged to go and see him today (21st). In my opinion the deceased was suffering from overwork & needed a rest. I don’t think he was an excessive drinker. He had never mentioned to me that he had any private worries.

Around 8:15 on the evening of the 20th a corporal on duty on Rue Poperinghe was passing the estaminet and saw a man coming out, “with his throat bleeding.”

The man fell to the ground, “struggling & bleeding profusely.” The corporal and another officer got him onto a stretcher and managed to get him to the Field Ambulance. The man, later identified as Herbert Clayton, died at about 8:45. When the corporal went back to Clayton’s room he found “a razor lying on the floor in a pool of blood.”

The court of inquiry came to “the opinion that he died from a wound which was self-inflicted during a fit of temporary insanity, probably induced through overstrain due to the nature of his work.” (He was not alone; according to official records, 1,683 men of the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the war were determined to be insane.)<sup>66</sup> A “Nature of Casualty” form dated May 26 suggested, “Information to be withheld from widow owing to serious condition of health.”

The vagueness of the official statement – “overstrain due to the nature of his work” – leaves a wide opening for perhaps fruitless but necessary conjecture. Clayton had been in France close to, if not on, the front line of battle, for three and a half months. Poperinghe was the centre of a huge concentration of troops. An early battlefield guide describes it as “a [wartime] centre for recreation, for shopping and for rest.” It also provided a safe area for field

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<sup>66</sup> Michael O’Leary, *The Regimental Rogue*, “Researching Canadian Soldiers of the First World War” – Part 14: The Wounded and Sick” <[http://regimentalrogue.com/misc/researching\\_first\\_world\\_war\\_soldiers\\_part14.htm](http://regimentalrogue.com/misc/researching_first_world_war_soldiers_part14.htm)<http://regimentalrogue.com/>> According to this source, 729 died of self-inflicted wounds. That might have included Clayton.

hospitals. But the war was close by – the din of battle could be heard on the streets of town – and ever present. The ancient town was under a constant barrage from German artillery guns.<sup>67</sup> A barber shop had a sign reading, “We do not shave while the enemy is shelling.” A motion picture about Ypres documented a bombing raid over the local “bath-house where the men are enjoying a hot bath in the tin tubs.”<sup>68</sup> Soldiers who were attempting in the midst of all this to take their rest and recreation would have had their stories of the horrors of the battlefield. The town was a place where the British locked up men condemned to execution (often for desertion, sometimes for murder), bringing them out to the town-hall courtyard at dawn and tying them up to posts to meet their fate.<sup>69</sup>

If a surviving film from the period is to be believed, bayonet instruction involved the men confronting a series of large, stuffed burlap bags hanging from a crossbar, with the teacher showing the youngsters how to run up and properly plunge their long sharp knives into the swinging sacks. The instruction might have seemed somewhat academic; although the military considered the lessons an important part of training, soldiers seldom had to use bayonets in the fighting. The leading cause of casualties was artillery fire, distantly followed by bullet fire.<sup>70</sup> Clayton would most likely not have been rejoicing in his job; and perhaps he had carried an already strained and beleaguered mind with him from Peterborough to Europe. Maybe he wished to forget something he’d seen but could not get it out of his mind. Perhaps he wished to forget something he’d done (maybe something even back in Peterborough) but could not get it out of his mind. Perhaps he was stressed out by the unsavory task of having to teach other men how to run their bayonets through other human beings.

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The YMCA on the Western Front provided canteens as well as sporting and recreational activities. (TVA, *Canadians on the Western Front*, 500)

According to the “Circumstances of Death Register,” Clayton was buried at the Steenvoorde French Military Cemetery; other sources indicate that that his grave site in the end became the Cararet-Rouge British Cemetery, in Pas de Calais, just north of Arras.

The *Examiner* listed on an almost daily basis the painful news of the deaths of “local boys” lost in the war, and a notice of Clayton’s death appeared in the paper on May 15: “Two More Peterboro Boys Make Supreme Sacrifice . . . Pte. E. Vosburgh and Sgt. Clayton Reported Dead.”

The article indicated that Clayton, a “well-known Peterborough soldier,” was “killed in action.” He was “officially reported” as dying in hospital in London on April 30, “presumably from wounds” (although he had actually died in a field ambulance hospital in Poperinghe). The news appeared, according to the account, during a time when his wife was confined at home with illness.

The story gave a brief account of his past life in Peterborough: that he had come from Hamilton, opened the Red Mill Theatre and later took over the management of the Royal Theatre “and afterwards secured the Tiz-It, the three picture houses being under his control for a short time.”



<sup>67</sup> “Poperinghe and World War One,” History Learning Site, <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/world-war-one/the-western-front-in-world-war-one/popperinghe-and-world-war-one/>. “Din of battle” in Barbara Ramsay Orr, “Haunting and Uplifting: A Visit to Flanders Fields,” *Globe and Mail*, April 27, 2015.

<sup>68</sup> Jeanette, “At the Capitol, The Story of ‘Ypres,’” *Examiner*, April 20, 1926, p.15; a review of *Ypres (Wipers)* (U.K., 1925), a mixture of wartime newsreel footage and re-enactments.

<sup>69</sup> “Poperinghe,” World War One Battlefields website, <http://www.ww1battlefields.co.uk/flanders/pop.html>. See also Philip Thomas Byard Clayton, *Tales of Talbot House, Everyman’s Club in Popenringhe [sic] and Ypres, 1915-1918* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1919), pp.8–10.

<sup>70</sup> “Canadian Training School in Shorncliffe,” NFB website, showing a film of training on the southeast coast of England, <http://www3.nfb.ca/ww1/building-a-force-film.php?id=531245>.

Sergt. Clayton was a very efficient instructor in physical training and bayonet fighting . . . and his ability in this respect was recognized by his being used as an instructor here and afterwards in England and at the base in France.

He was survived by his wife and adopted son. "He was widely known in the city and the news of his death will be a shock to many."<sup>71</sup>

Florence had written to his commanding officer, Major J. Betts, to obtain information about her husband's death, but it seems she might never have found out just how he died. In a return letter, received in July, Major Betts expressed sympathy on the loss of her husband but regretted that he was "unable to obtain any particulars . . . excepting that he and two other N.C.O.'s were wounded by a stray shell, and all three died from wounds." Betts would surely have known what had happened but was apparently not in a position to disclose it; the details of the death remained a military secret.

To help ease her mind, Betts commented on Clayton's "excellent" work:

He was a very keen and hard working instructor and highly spoken of by all with whom he came in contact. . . . I never wish for a more capable and conscientious man. He helped to prepare the gallant troops who stormed Messines and Whycheate . . .

Betts also included a letter from C.H. Harington, Second Army, praising Clayton and his staff for their work in ensuring the recent success of the army.<sup>72</sup>

Florence remained in the city for the rest of her life, although, quite oddly, it seems she had considered moving elsewhere after Herbert went into the army. In December 1915 she had advertised an auction sale of her "household effects, and furnishings," stating that she was leaving the city. "Everything is new and up-to-date, and includes one piano, and walnut furnishings, and all necessary household effects of a well furnished home."<sup>73</sup> Given that this ad appeared several times, it seems she was quite bound on starting over; which raises questions about what had happened between her and Herbert. It seems quite possible that things had not gone well between them. For some reason, though, she changed her mind and remained in the city. She and her son soon moved over to her mother and brother's home at 694 George Street.

Florence worked as a "sales lady" at the family clothing store, McNabb's Ladies' Wear, owned and managed by her brother, until her own death, at age forty-two, in 1929. She had been a faithful member of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, teaching a primary class there for many years, and a member of Order of the Eastern Star.<sup>74</sup>

The memory of Herbert Clayton, the once-prominent self-described "theatrical man" about town — the manager once identified in a headline as a "moving picture magnate" — faded. A 1926 *Examiner* review of a film called *Ypres* (1925), a mixture of wartime newsreel footage and re-enactments, mentions Poperinghe and tells about the sign in the barber shop that says "We do not shave while the enemy are shelling," but it appears that no one knew that a "Peterborough boy" met his fate there. A 1929 retrospective *Examiner* article on Peterborough's "amusement" history noted almost in passing, "The late *Jack Clayton* had a great deal to do with the old Red Mill and the Princess . . ." — not quite taking care to get either his name or the extent of his business correct.<sup>75</sup> His name remains in Peterborough's Confederation Square, etched on the war memorial's list of Peterborough soldiers killed in the First World War. The family gravestone in Little Lake Cemetery simply reads "Died at Vimy Ridge France."

We simply don't know if Herbert Clayton had severe problems contemplating the misery and suffering he saw; if he had carried problems, financial and/or domestic, overseas with him from his life in Peterborough; or if he suffered from an undiagnosed mental illness. As we do know, quite a while before his death his wife was considering moving out of the house they shared and selling off all the furniture. In the eyes of most he became,

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<sup>71</sup> "Local Casualties in To-Day's List Are Again Heavy," *Examiner*, May 15, 1917, p.1.

<sup>72</sup> "Work of Late Sergt. Clayton Was Appreciated," *Examiner*, Aug. 7, 1917, p.8. The military personnel record appears to have never been released to the family. When I talked to Kent Clayton, he said he and others did not know the details of Herbert Clayton's death. A number of different items, plus the details of the inquiry, leave no doubt as to what happened.

<sup>73</sup> "Auction Sale of Household Effects," *Examiner*, Dec. 4, 1915, p.14.

<sup>74</sup> Obituary, *Examiner*, April 15, 1929, p.12. "Her husband made the supreme sacrifice at Wytshaete [*sic*] Ridge in the Great War" [Wytshaete]. *Vernon's City of Peterborough Directory for the Year 1932* lists her son, John Clayton, as a student, living at 638 George St., but he disappears from the local listings after that. He may have moved to Brantford with John A. McNabb in the mid-1930s.

<sup>75</sup> "Princess Theatre Purchased by Moving Picture Magnate," *Evening Review*, Oct. 16, 1913, p.1; Jeanette, "At the Capitol: The Story of 'Ypres,'" *Examiner*, April 20, 1926, p.15; "Peterborough Always Had Plenty of Amusements," *Examiner*, July 3, 1929, p.12, emphasis added.

most simply, one of the approximately 61,000 Canadian wartime casualties. The easy thing was to say, as on his Peterborough tombstone – there for the ages – that he died at Vimy Ridge, despite official evidence to the contrary.

What we do know is that Herbert Clayton appeared in town at just the right time to make a key contribution to the establishment – and especially, strengthening – of the local motion picture exhibition business.

In the early years of the second decade of the twentieth century, film exhibition was undergoing a transformation from the fly-by-the-seat-of-the-pants, short-lived nickelodeon period to a more stable, expanding enterprise that would become a permanent fixture of local culture, shaping the atmosphere of the downtown streets and the viewing practices of audiences.<sup>76</sup> Early on, going to the short, silent motion pictures had been a largely working-class pastime, appealing with its low cost; but now, like fellow exhibitors Pappas, Robinson, and the Turners, Clayton persuaded patrons from the emerging middle class to develop the movie-going habit – exhibiting an air of pretension, for instance, in bringing the Italian “operatic star” D’Angelo to the Red Mill. He dreamed up new schemes to keep the people coming. Like other good managers, keeping his “ear to the ground,” he caught on to the mood of his audiences. In a period of intense competition for the amusement coin, Clayton helped to (in the words of cinema historian Lary May) “raise movies above their disreputable origins.”<sup>77</sup>

While still making sure to appeal to the possible working class patrons, he worked at ensuring an expansion of the audience. He put his emphasis on the Red Mill as a “high class popular picture palace.” His theatre, as the *Examiner* put it, ended up attracting “the cream of Peterborough’s society and business folk.” He made efforts on a daily basis: reaching out, for instance, not only to unionists but to other sectors of the community, promoting “ladies afternoons,” offering proceeds to local war funds, presenting the finest music – or even volunteering to serve as physical director of the hockey club. He was one of those few who, as film historian George Potamianos put it, “positioned the new theatre as a legitimate community business worthy of patronage.”<sup>78</sup> He offered not just moving pictures but a sense of community that provided local residents with a sense of pride. In doing so he became, for a short time, Peterborough’s prime “theatre man,” displacing the others engaged in the same business.

As Clayton himself put it in a post encouraging suggestions for the operation of the Tiz-It, “This theatre is a public institution, and for that reason we wish the public to have our theatre programme presented to suit everybody. . . . Tell us frankly what you would do.”<sup>79</sup>

For a time Clayton demonstrated those attributes articulated by one of his contemporaries, writer Epes Winthrop Sargent, in 1915:

If the Exhibitor himself has the right sort of personality, it pays to impress this not only on the house people but on the patrons. This applies more forcefully, of course, to the small town house or the neighborhood theatre, for here good will counts for more than it does at the large enterprise in the business district of a city, but most picture theatres are built up on personality alone. They are intimate and friendly.<sup>80</sup>

Despite the financial setbacks (with the fire at the Princess and the cost of subsequent renovations taking the biggest toll) – and the mysterious and tragic end of his life as a soldier in wartime Europe – Herbert Clayton remains a unique local “theatrical man,” a talented innovator who contributed mightily to the establishment of the movie exhibition business and culture in downtown Peterborough.

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**Many thanks** to Kent Clayton, Herbert’s grandson, who provided both family information and images. Also to Catherine Dibben, who helped in the early stages of the research; to John Wadland, who read an early draft of my writing about Clayton; to the steady helpers at the Trent Valley Archives and Peterborough Museum and Archives; to Elwood Jones, for his suggestions; and, as always, to Ferne Cristall, my constant support and most thorough reader.

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<sup>76</sup> For this thought, thanks to Paul S. Moore, “Nathan L. Nathanson Introduces Canadian Odeon: Producing National Competition in Film Exhibition,” *Canadian Journal of Film Studies*, 12,2 (Fall 2003), p.40.

<sup>77</sup> Lary May, *Screening Out the Past: The Birth of Mass Culture and the Motion Picture Industry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980/83), p.148.

<sup>78</sup> George Potamianos, “Building Movie Audiences in Placerville, California, 1908–1915,” in *Hollywood in the Neighborhood: Historical Case Studies of Local Moviegoing*, ed. Kathryn H. Fuller-Seeley (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2008), p.71.

<sup>79</sup> “Tiz-It Theatre,” *Examiner*, March 10, 1915, p.12.

<sup>80</sup> Epes Winthrop Sargent, *Picture Theatre Advertising* (Moving Picture World/Chalmers Publishing Co.: New York, 1915, p.3.



# J. J. HARTLEY'S DIARY OF HIS VISIT TO AMERICAN CITIES

EXTENDED TRIP FORTUITOUSLY PRESENTED FAIRS IN ROCHESTER, SYRACUSE AND BATAVIA—WAS  
SHOWN THROUGH FORD PLANT AND DETROIT NEWS BUILDING

*Examiner 23 Oct 1920*

To The Editor:

Dear Sir,—With your permission I would like to give you an account of what I saw while on a holiday trip of five weeks across the line on the American side. It may not be of much interest to those who have gone over the same ground, but to those who have not taken a trip of this kind, it may be interesting.

I left Peterborough on September 3rd, went to Toronto, where I spent several days, and attended the Exhibition, which, of course, was very good. I need not make much comment on the Toronto Fair as I presume the majority of our citizens have attended the Exhibition at some time or other. To those who have not I would say it would be well worth while to do so.

From Toronto I went to Rochester, N.Y., by way of Buffalo. While there I attended the Rochester Fair, which was going on that week. It was very good what there was of it, but nothing to be compared with Toronto. One thing I admired was the buildings, which I think was much better than those of Toronto. Another thing that I admired was the art exhibit, which was really fine. There was very little live stock on Exhibition and they have no race track, so there was no horse racing.

From Rochester I went to Syracuse and it so happened that the Syracuse State Fair opened the day I got there. I stayed four days and attended the Fair, but not every day. They had a very fine exhibit of live stock of all kinds and, of course, machinery of all description. The poultry exhibit *was* the largest I ever saw and the buildings were really grand—all built of nice buff pressed brick—and such large buildings! As I viewed those buildings I must confess that I just felt that I would like to be a millionaire for once as I had it in my heart that I would like to be able to put such buildings as those on the Peterborough Exhibition Grounds. Syracuse is a fine city *of* about two hundred thousand population, and quite up-to-date in every respect. I was particularly interested in Syracuse, as it was in that city I learned my trade, over fifty years ago.

I enjoyed my visit there and then came back to Rochester, where I had a very pleasant visit with a brother and a sister and nephews and nieces and me pda, all of whom were anxious to give me a real good time, and they did it. I may say that Rochester is a very beautiful city of about three hundred thousand population.

## **Saw Batavia Fair.**

From Rochester I went to Batavia and strange to say their Industrial Exhibition was going on when I got there, so, of course, I attended the Fair there and it was a real good Fair for the size of the place. Batavia is a small city of about fifteen or sixteen thousand, but quite up-to-date, with paved streets, well kept and an abundant supply of shade trees. They have a sewer disposal plant which they claim to be one of the best in the country. The City of Rochester, I understand, has

installed the same system, which they completed last year. It is the Imhoff system. Batavia also has an up-to-date Alteration plant. I have to thank Mr. Charles W. Hartley, a prominent business man and an ex alderman of the city, and who was acting mayor for the greater part of the year when those improvements were installed, who very kindly set aside his business for the time being and took me around the city and gave me all the information he possibly could in regard to those systems.

I stayed in Batavia three days and enjoyed the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Hartley who, like all true Americans, consider it a real pleasure to entertain a Canadian, and I may say that wherever I went I found nothing but the most kindly feeling towards Canada and the Canadian people.

## **In the Motor City.**

From Batavia I went to Detroit. This is a city of more than a million population, and is considered one of the most beautiful cities in the United States. While there I visited Belle Isle Park. This, is an island in the Detroit River and has many attractions which I will not stay to mention, but will just say that any person going to Detroit should not fail to visit Belle Isle Park.

While in Detroit I had the pleasure of visiting the Henry Ford factory, which I was given to understand has over thirty-six thousand hands employed. They have a guide there who takes visitors through the factory at certain hours every day. He is very courteous and stops every little while as you are passing along and explains the working of the machines and the purpose for which they are used. You would wonder how so many employees could work in so small space, but men are standing very close together and each piece of the oar is carried along on carriers and the larger pieces are carried by small cranes and each man does his work as it passes along. Those carriers move slowly so that each man has time, to do his part as it moves along. There are many other things that I might mention, but it would take up too much space, suffice it to say that it is well worth while to go through the Henry Ford automobile factory.

I also visited the Detroit News publishing house through the courtesy of one of the staff. I was taken all through the building and this gentleman took the pains of explaining everything as we went along. The building is five stories high and covers three-quarters of a block and they claim that it is the largest newspaper building plant in the world. The private library contains over 10,000 volumes. They have a hospital perfectly equipped, also a rest room, a cafe and many other things too numerous to mention for the convenience and comfort of their employees. They employ over five hundred hands and 600 boys carry or sell the papers in Detroit alone.

## **Building Conditions.**

Trade conditions in Detroit have been extra good for the last two or three years. The city has erected a fine Public Library, which is almost completed. The cost, I understand,

will be over two million dollars. It is built of white marble and is a beautiful structure. The General Motor Co. has in course of erection an office building which is 16 stories high. It is built of Indiana stone. It is a fine building. There are quite a number of large buildings of different kinds in course of erection.

House building, which was quite brisk in the early part of the season, has taken quite a slump. I was told by builders that the reason was that banks had refused to loan any more money on houses for the present. At least it appears that banks over there advance money on houses while in course of erection and then take a mortgage on the property. So when the banks fail to put up the money the house-building stops. However, this may be only temporary.

Some claim that it is on account of the Presidential election coming on this fall. However, I found in all those cities that factories were slacking off and letting quite a number of their workmen off. It is going to be hard on the working men if they are out of work this coming winter for rents in particular are very high. Houses that would rent in Peterborough for thirty dollars a month, you would have to pay eighty or ninety dollars for in Detroit. Even the smallest flats were from forty to sixty dollars per month and a very common house that we would consider \$3,000 a good price

for here, would sell over there for \$7,000 or \$8,000. I was in some new houses with six rooms and bathroom. I asked the price and they said \$14,500 and some \$18,000. but the demand for houses is such that they will give most any price they ask. I knew people think that wages are high and so they are but how can a man with a family live under such conditions if he doesn't get big wages.

There are many other things that I would like to mention, but I feel that I am intruding on your space and will have to close.

While in Detroit I went over to Windsor and had a look around. Windsor is quite a busy place. After spending ten days in Detroit I came back to Toronto where I stayed a couple of days, and I may say that Toronto is a city that any Canadian may well be proud of. I then came back to good old Peterborough, which, for a place to live in, to my way of thinking, is second to none, thus finishing a five weeks' trip which I fully enjoyed.

Thanking you very kindly for space.

Very sincerely.

J. J. HARTLEY

## J J Hartley was a busy contractor

*Elwood H. Jones*

*Ed. Note, this is a column that I wrote for the Peterborough Examiner in 2009.*



Construction workers accounted for perhaps a fifth of the jobs in Peterborough. Historians often stress the economic of manufacturing, commercial or service sector jobs, all of which were very important in the growth of Peterborough. Before there are factories or stores or homes, carpenters and related trades people are busy ensuring the needed buildings have been built.

From the 1860s to the 1920s, J. J. Hartley was

particularly active. John James Hartley (1847-1930) spent nearly his entire life in Peterborough. J. J. was the son of John A. Hartley, a businessman in Peterborough from 1843 until he died in 1888. The father was an insurance agent in the 1869 assessment roll, and worked for awhile for Oughtry Morrow, Peterborough's leading merchant in the 1840s.

Martha Ann Kidd's *Peterborough's Architectural Heritage* shows John A. Hartley living at 52 Murray Street,

across from the Peterborough Jail. This 1½ storey frame house was built in 1847 for John A. Hartley and that house was home for his widow in 1890. Earlier, the Hartleys had lived on Antrim Street, a short street dominated by people in the construction trades. Kidd noted that builders living on Antrim Street included Thomas Hartley, John Hartley, Samuel Griffith, David Gamble, David Carlisle and John Carlisle.

None were busier than J. J. Hartley, who spent nearly his entire life in Peterborough. J. J. Hartley was born on the south side of Antrim, and by the early 1870s was living at 234 Antrim Street, his home until he died, across the street from where he had been born. Hartley's house was on the eastern slope of Smithtown Hill, at the corners of Antrim, Aylmer and Parkhill.

When quite young, Hartley went to Syracuse, New York, where he learned the brick and masonry trades. He returned to Peterborough, where his pay dropped from \$4.50 a day to two dollars a day. He spent four years as a journeyman and then entered into a contract position with David Carlisle (d. 1870) who had been one of the leading builders of his generation. Carlisle had constructed, for example, the first market hall in 1851. David Carlisle built the large two and a half-storey house at 168 Antrim Street which contains so many architectural features that Martha Kidd aptly dubbed the house a "builder's sample." Carlisle died suddenly and Hartley continued the contracts alone, and continued to run his own building business. After 1896, Carlisle was in partnership with A. A. McIntyre (1858-1953) a kindred spirit. McIntyre, a native of Otonabee township, was mayor of Peterborough for 1920 and 1921.

Many buildings associated with Hartley are still standing. He built the Peterborough Hardware Block at 368 George Street; this site is best known as the former Black's Department Store. He built the buildings associated with the Bank of Commerce, on the south-east corner of Water and Hunter. This dramatic combination of buildings built for George A. Cox had quite large frontage for downtown Peterborough buildings and were built as office buildings. He built the large Cordage Works for the Canadian Cordage Company. These well-built buildings at Aylmer Street near Perry have proved very adaptable to new industries, such as Nashua Papers and Canadian Sealright. Nearby, he built a factory for manufacturing shovels, known as Lundy Shovels and Peterborough Shovels, at the north-east corner of Perry and Stewart Streets. The buildings were bought by Canadian Raybestos in 1920 and expanded over the years. Hartley built the factory of the Peterborough Lock Company, on Simcoe Street where the city bus terminal stands. The YWCA building was built in 1910 at the corner of Simcoe and Aylmer; after the 1996 fire, the building was demolished and replaced with the Greyhound bus station. Hartley also built the YMCA in 1896, made additions to the Queen Alexandra School when it became the model school for teacher training, King George School, and the Isolation Hospital built on Langton Street; it was replaced by Fairhaven building which in turn was demolished in recent memory after the new Fairhaven was built. Hartley's addition to Quaker Oats was lost in the fire of December 11, 1916. He was the builder for the enlarging of St Paul's Presbyterian Church in the 1880s; recently, pillars were added to support the roof. The Crystal

Block at 412 George Street just north of Hunter Street was built by Hartley to replace premises destroyed by fire. He also built King George School.

The Examiner in 1927 observed that nearly every street in town had a house built by Hartley. It is hard to confirm such a statement. Browsing through Martha Kidd's book I can identify several houses built by J. J. Hartley or for John A. Hartley. In 1882, Hartley built the house at 238 Antrim, at the north-west corner of Aylmer Street; this impressive white brick house on Smithtown Hill can be seen from quite a distance. He built the William Methers carriage factory, now a bicycle store, at 464 Aylmer Street North, and probably the Methers row housing at Aylmer and Murray Street, south-east corner. Examples of his brick-laying expertise can be seen at George Street Methodist (now United) Church in 1875, and at houses such as at 91 London Street and 465 Downie Street. Perhaps his signature houses were the two houses at the corner of Water and London that today house Harstone House, the Red Cross headquarters, and the offices of Stow, Brown and McLeod, the accounting firm. He also built houses at 710 Water Street, 588 Park Street, the Dr Halliday house at 455 Water, and probably 52 Murray and 497 Dickson Street. One of his houses, at the corner of Water and Murray, was demolished to make way for the Peterborough City Hall in 1951.

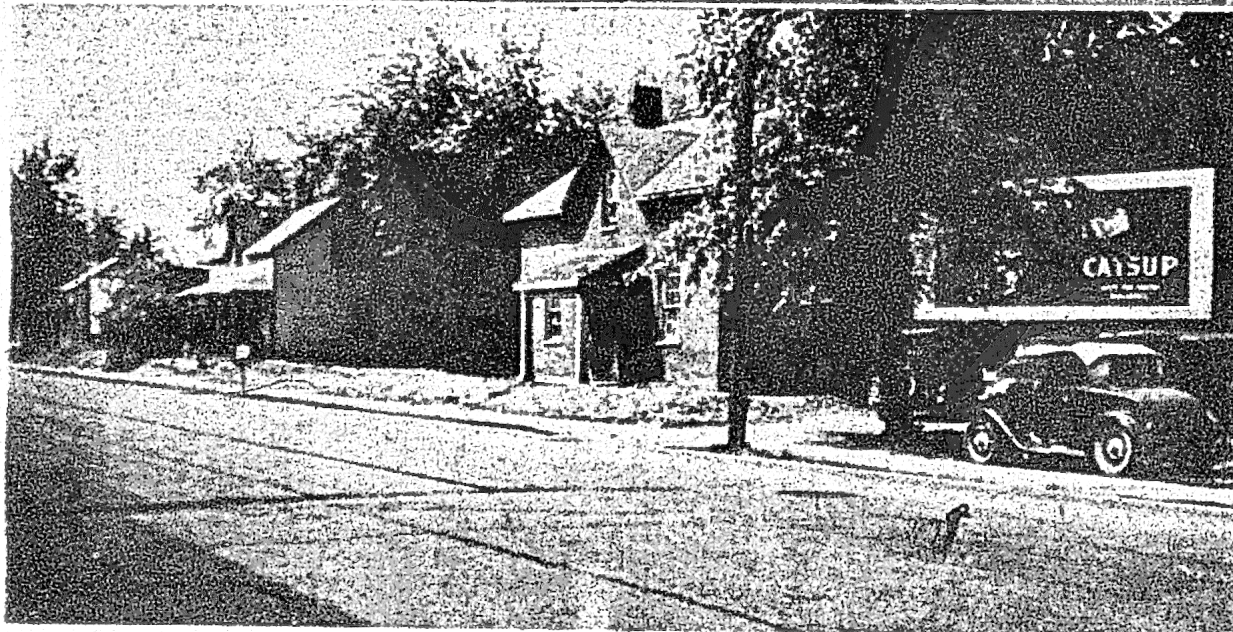
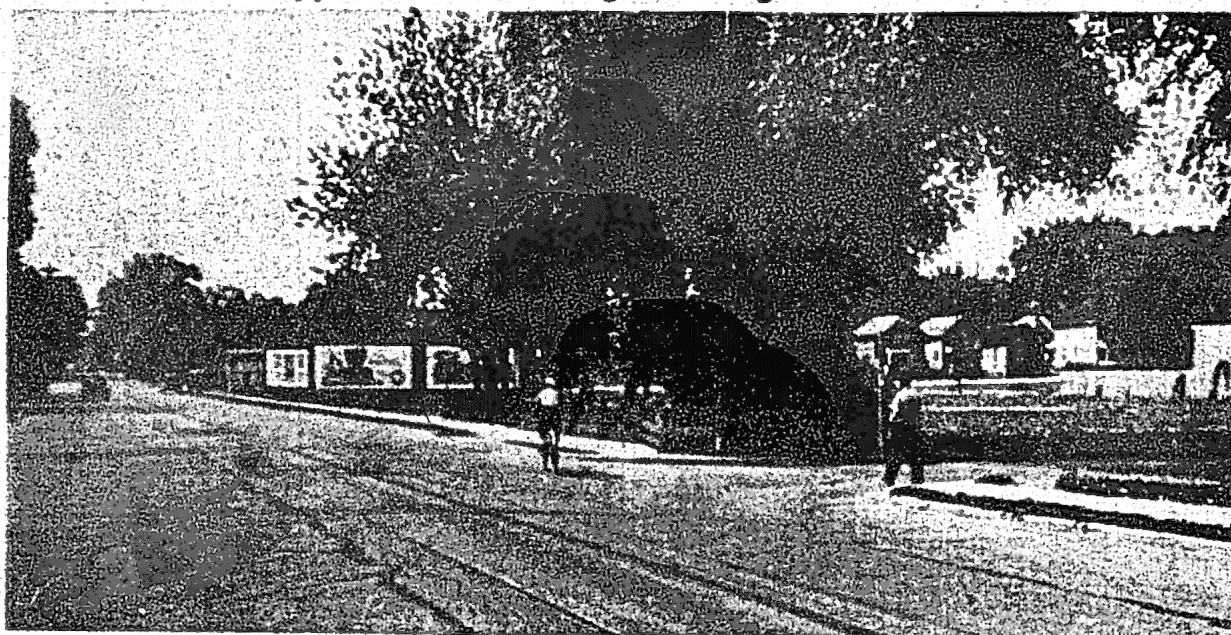
Being a builder gave Hartley strong perspectives on local life, and he was very engaged in the community. In the 1920s he was a valuable resource for community memory of Peterborough's growth, the work force and local politics. He had built many of the city's landmarks. He had personally seen the changing rates paid to workers, and was a valued spokesman for workers and the need for better wages. Bricklayers got \$2.50 a day for ten hours work in the 1870s, but when the YMCA was built in 1896, \$1.75 was all he could command. Many construction workers had to settle for \$1.25 a day. After the Quaker fire, he was president of the Peterborough Trades and Labour Council, and led negotiations with Mayor J. J. Duffus to persuade Quaker Oats to rebuild their plant.

J. J. Hartley sat on the local board of health, on the Little Lake Cemetery Board, on the board of the YMCA and served on the Town Trust. He was a town councillor for Ward 4 for most of the 1880s. Hartley supported A. L. Davis in his 1897 run for mayor against William Yelland. Hartley sponsored Davis probably because both were prominent Liberals. But Yelland was a carriage maker who saw this election as capitalists versus labour. Davis was the son-in-law of George A. Cox, perhaps the second richest man in Canada. There were many bitterly contested municipal elections between then and the early 1920s. Some races were three-way but nearly every election featured a merchant or rich men or representatives of the Board of Trade running against a representative of the working class. W. H. Buller, a Conservative, won in 1914 against two Liberals, George A. Gillespie and J. J. Hartley.

Hartley had high standards and a deep sense of community spirit. He also developed effective strategies for the participation of workers in local politics. His legacy also includes the high-quality buildings still standing.



## Old Houses To Disappear With Widening Of George Street



The three houses in the LOWER picture are situated on the west side of George Street, south of the C.P.R., and opposite the plant of Canada Packers. If the company accepts the council's terms the street will be widened twenty-five feet, providing a swing-out for traffic while trucks are being loaded and unloaded at the factory. The houses will be demolished, the street car rails will be taken up, and other improvements are mentioned especially on the west side of the widening and along the creek.

The UPPER picture indicates a continuation of George Street from Townsend to Rink Street. While the council is surveying potential works schemes to provide employment, Alderman McIntyre has raised the question why the proposed widening of George Street should be extended an-

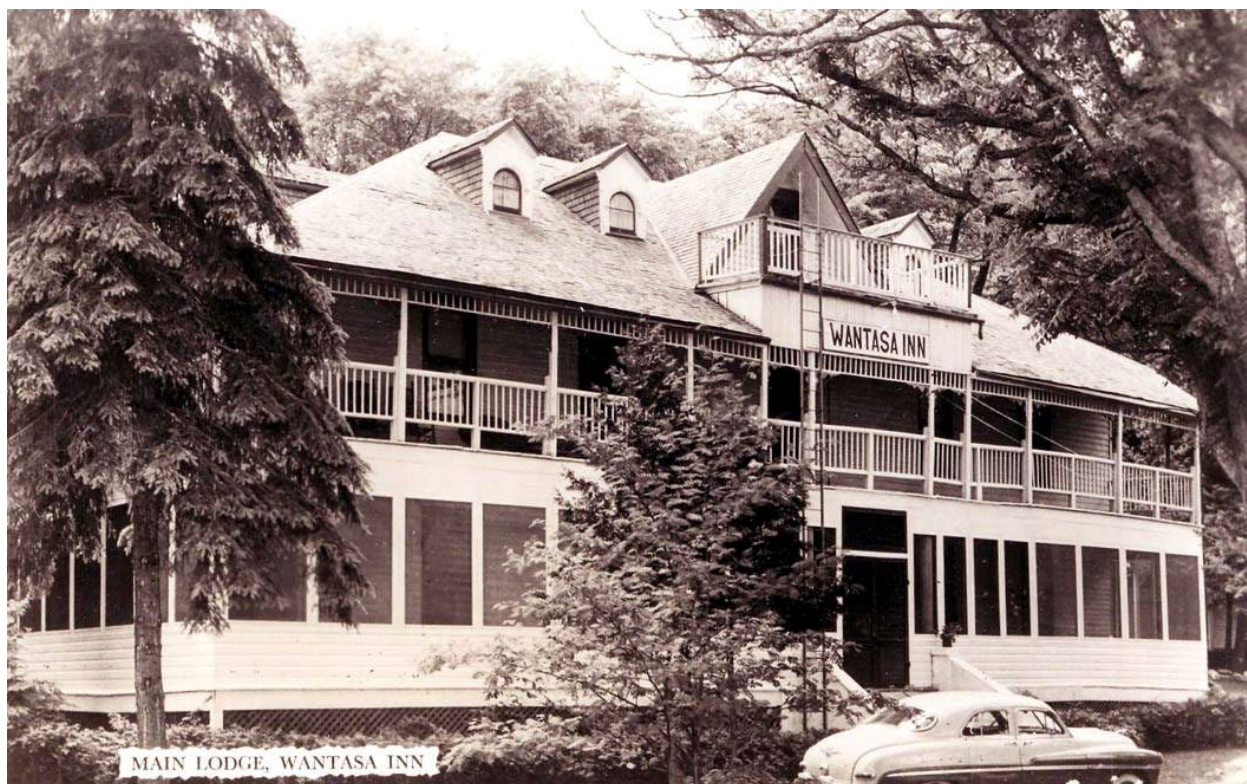
other block south to Rink Street. The city owns the property on the west side of the street in that block, and it is expected as a future change in traffic routes that with the completion of Crescent Street north from Perry Street through the old property of the McDonald Estate to the water side at Rink Street motor traffic from Crescent and Lock Streets will follow the new route and swing into George Street at Rink Street.

There is also the possibility of a new bridge being built some day from McDonald's Point, and for various reasons the council has been inclined to give some consideration to the two-block widening project. These pictures present the matter to ratepayers who are interested in the course of the council's affairs.

Peterborough Examiner, 1939. An interesting slice of Peterborough history, with thanks to Rob Clarke. Eighty years later and one is left to wonder what happened to some of the ideas presented here.



## Remembering Andre Dorfman



*Andre Dorfman was a long time treasurer of Trent Valley Archives, but he was also a showman. The picture on the right shows him as a cardinal at a special TVA Christmas fundraiser at Showplace Peterborough.*





**WANTASA INN RATES**  
McCracken's Landing, Stoney Lake, Ont.

**MAIN BUILDING**

Weekly, per person ..... \$42.00  
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LOG CABIN ROOMS—Hot and cold running water, electrically lighted, innerspring mattresses, bath-room adjoining.  
Single and double rooms—  
Weekly, per person ..... \$42.00  
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**LOG CABINS**

Having two double rooms, fully equipped, private bathroom, hot and cold running water and electrically lighted. Innerspring mattresses.  
Weekly, per person ..... \$42.00  
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LOG CABINS—Same as above with closed in screened verandah.  
Weekly, per person ..... \$48.00 - \$50.00  
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Children under 10 years of age — ½ Rate





Stoney Lake, "The Gem of the Kawarthas"

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Toronto to Peterborough ..... 70 miles  
Peterborough to Lakefield ..... 10 miles  
Lakefield to McCracken's Landing ..... 12 miles

Paved Highway from Toronto to Lakefield. Also paved road from Lakefield, except last mile—follow signs.



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STONEY LAKE, ONTARIO

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Andre Dorfman, a long-time pillar of the Trent Valley Archives, has passed away, aged 85.

When we moved into the Fairview Heritage Centre, Alma Dorfman, arranged for us to the large green sign facing both Carnegie and Woodland Drive. Over the years Andre facilitated the transfer of many collections to Trent Valley Archives: notably, Wantasa Inn; the Upper Stoney Lake Cottagers Association; Dummer township photos; maps of Stoney Lake; and a massive genealogical data base of family connections in the Peterborough area, a data base that he continued to update and augment.

Andre was a regular on our Board of Directors for some years. He kept a close eye on our finances. He was a great supporter of our outreach with new events such as our Christmas concerts, most notably at Showplace, where he was a singing cardinal.

Andre was a pioneer in the use of computers for genealogical research and this work is accessible at Trent Valley Archives. Andre was an avid collector of stories and memorabilia related to Upper Stoney Lake and Dummer Township. His photos were used in publications such as the Jean Murray Cole's *Origins the History of Dummer Township* (1998). His pictures were used by Gord Berry and Leslie Wootton in *Upper Stoney Lake : Gem of the Kawarthas* (2002) and Gord Berry arranged for TVA to have copies that are in the Gordon Berry fonds.

Memories of Andre are rekindled whenever people think of the Upper Stoney Lake.

My most treasured memory of Andre was the tour of Stoney Lake that he masterminded. We had stops at McCracken's Landing, at the Upper Stoney Lake Association club house and at Viamede for lunch. We viewed the glass cottage, passed Eagle Mount and Davis islands. The maps have allowed me to revisit the sites in imagination. And as the guest of Blair Mackenzie I had another memorable visit to Juniper Island. As a prairie land lubber I appreciate these lake visits the more.

Much of Andre's life centred around Stoney Lake, and the communities nearby. We were lucky that Lakefield and Peterborough were in his orbit, and we will long treasure the memories. His love of local history and genealogy permeated what mattered to Trent Valley Archives.

Our condolences to Susan Kyle, Tim Dorfman and their families. RIP.

## Trent Valley Archives Stoney Lake Historic Puzzles

1. Group in Tent, Roger Camp Upper Stoney Lake. F375 C/36  
Jack Fairbairn's uncle, George M. Roger, had with E. B. Edwards purchased Juniper Island in 1883 to host the American Canoe Association regatta. It remained a favourite place to camp. This particular group posed in front of a tall tent, and we get a glimpse of the camping life. Two other tents are visible. Fairbairn has captured the attitudes and the clothing that provide insight into the specialness of cottage holidays.
2. Gower's Camp Grubbe's Island Stoney Lake. F375 C/34  
Gower's group of campers stayed at Haselwood, the 1888 cottage on Grubbe's Island a favourite resort on Upper Stoney Lake resort. Note the fascinating 1860s Ensign which contained the shields of early Canadian provinces. Robert W. R. Grubbe (1844-1923), with the Bank of Toronto mainly in Peterborough, was a veteran of the Fenian Raids 1866.



Trent Valley Archives has impressive historical collections relating to Peterborough and the Kawarthas.

These two interesting scenes of early camping and cottaging at Stony Lake, Peterborough County are copied from our Fairbairn family collection of glass negatives. Jack [J. M. R.] Fairbairn (1873-1954) was the main photographer and the negatives cover aspects of his career with Canadian Pacific Railways, of which he was the long-time chief engineer. Even while the family lived in Montreal they maintained a cottage at Stony Lake that had been in the family since the 1880s. His private railway car was kept in Lakefield when he was at Juniper Island, and was occasionally used for emergencies.

Trent Valley Archives has been promoting history and archives in the heart of east central Ontario since 1989 and its operations are centred in Selwyn Township in its historic building at 567 Carnegie Avenue. For details see our webpage [www.trentvalleyarchives.com](http://www.trentvalleyarchives.com) and follow us on Facebook.



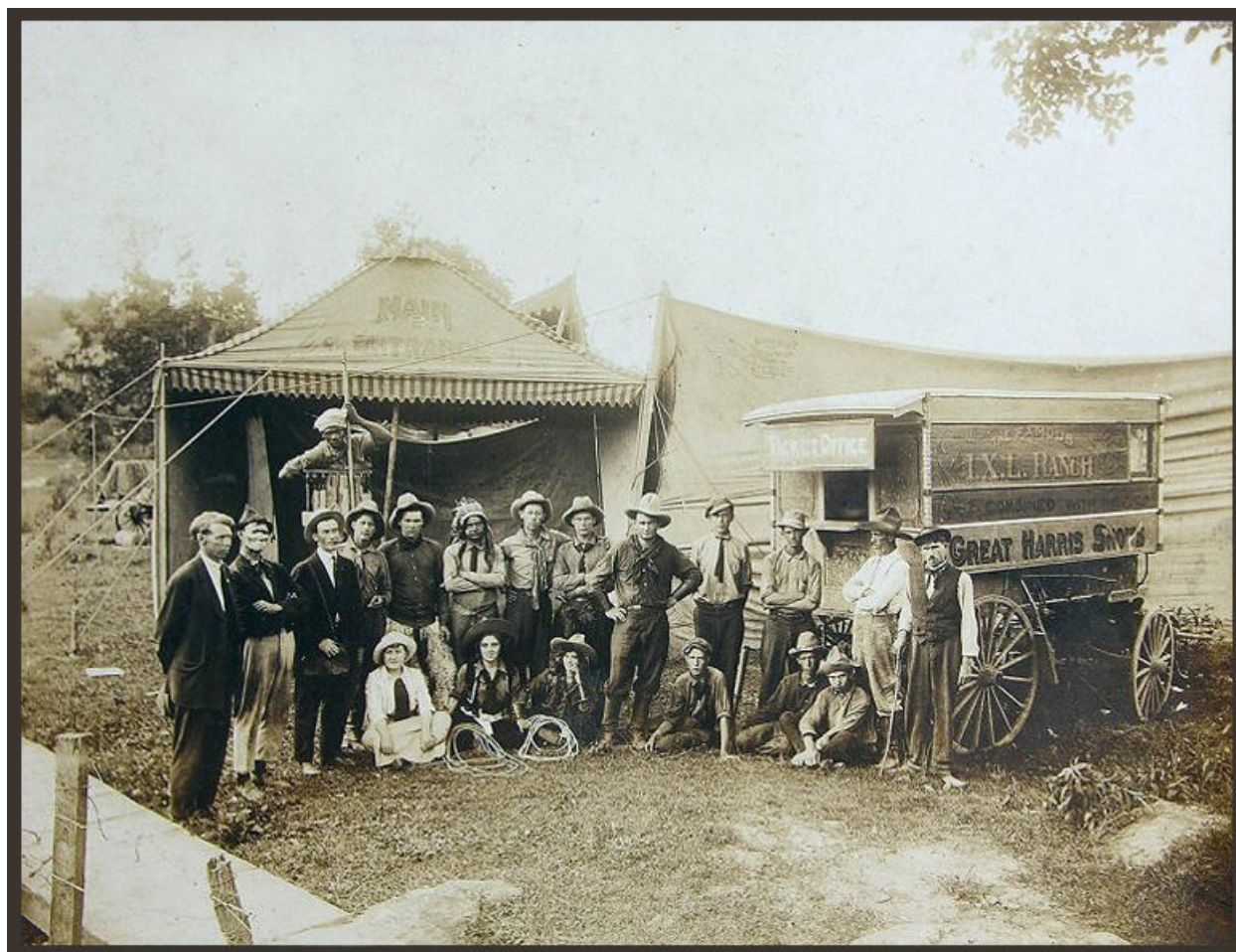
## CHARLIE BRENNAN GAINED CIRCUS FAME IN STATES; FORERUNNER TO ROGERS

Harry Winch's Butcher Boy Attracted by Two Texans.  
HIS WORK HIS HOBBY.

*Examiner, 7 March 1936  
Some editorial comments*

A butcher's boy who rose to stardom in one of the first wild west shows was the subject of a reminiscence by William J. Lundy, Aylmer street, who assisted the Examiner in identifying some of the old photographs which were recently published in a series that recalled some of the old landmarks of Peterboro's past.

"The boy was Charlie Brennan." Mr. Lundy said. "He worked for Harry Winch, who conducted a butcher shop for years here. To-day we call them meat shops. Young Brennan was an exceedingly active and industrious boy. He drove Mr. Winch's delivery rig and did other work for him. You have heard the expression 'smart as a steel trap.' That was especially true of Charlie Brennan. He did things swiftly, even to making his deliveries. And he could get around among cattle and could handle them far better than other boys of his age.



### Attracted Texans.

One time two big cattle men, drovers we called them, came here from Texas. I think they were visiting relatives in Peterboro. and some how or other they noticed Charlie Brennan and the remarkable ability he had in herding and driving cattle. They were so impressed by his aptitude for the work that they decided to take him to Texas where they had a ranch of long horned cattle. When they left Peterboro young Brennan went with them, and in Texas he became one of the greatest cowboys of



his day, an expert with the lariat with which cattle were lassoed. He developed this skill to such an extent that he was engaged with one of the earliest wild west shows like that of "Buffalo Bill" Cody's, and was billed as "Comanche Charlie."



#### **Antedated Will Rogers.**

Brennan gained circus fame throughout the United States, and I think it would be safe to say that he was a forerunner of the Will Rogers type of lariat experts.

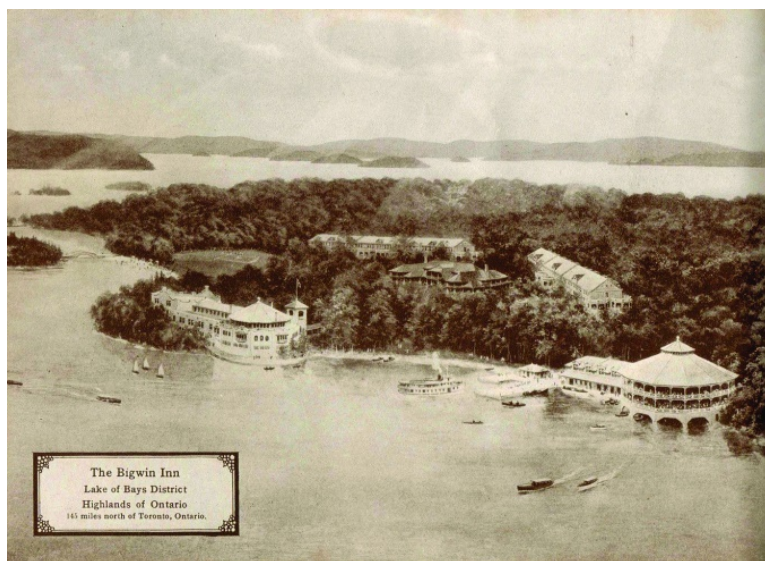
He died about fifteen years ago in Chicago, I think older residents like John Mervin will remember Charlie Brennan. Even as a boy his work was his hobby. He was all for getting ahead, and, as I said, the proficiency he attained just as a delivery boy for Harry Winch was the grand work of the career which of course he could not foresee when he was driving cattle around Peterboro. He did his job so well, and it was a very ordinary job, that his natural smartness appealed to the two Texans when they saw him."

#### **Garnet Wolseley.**

Mr. Lundy believed that one of the greatest men who ever lived in Peterboro was the comparatively ego man who as General Wolseley was in command of the Red River expedition which suppressed the insurrection of Louts Riel in the northwest in 1870. Garnet Wolseley had a distinguished military career in Burma, the Crimea, India and Africa. He led the Nile expedition for the relief of General Gordon, and for that service was raised to the peerage as Baron Wolseley. A Canadian detachment accompanied him up the Nile. One of the survivors of that [1885] expedition is William Harris of this city.

Mr. Lundy said that as a young officer Wolseley had room on Hunter street west of George street and was also a guest of Ivan O'Beirne who lived at the north-east corner of Dalhousie and Aylmer streets. Mr. O'Beirne died in 1874 and is buried in Little Lake cemetery.

#### **Chief Bigwin.**



before the King died.

Those were three men who to different respects were personages and who in their respective days lived for a time in Peterboro'!

#### **Lundy's Lane.**

Incidentally the Lundy family has been attached to the community for many years. Joseph Lundy, father of William, was a contractor, and it is recalled that he built all the stations on the Canadian Pacific Railway between Indian River and Toronto except Peterboro and North Toronto, both of which were of brick. The Lundy home is still an attractive residence at the southwest corner of Monaghan Road and Lundy's Lane, which was named for Joseph Lundy.

"Michael Fortune, who died at Keene a few days ago, worked for my father on the railway stations."

"Probably no person is old enough to remember a famous Indian, Chief Bigwin, whose grandson at the age of 88 died a short time ago on the Rama reserve. I met the grandson some years ago at the CPR station. He was then an old man. He told me that he used to visit Peterborough as a boy, and that his grandfather was as big a man as the famous Chief Joseph Brant.

He also told me that his grandfather was one of the Chiefs who helped to paddle King Edward VII across Rice Lake when as the Prince of Wales he was touring Canada. Those who had arranged the trip would not trust the old bridge over Rice Lake, so the passage from Harwood to the Otonabee shore was entrusted to leading Indians. That is the story, and Chief Bigwin accompanied the Prince of Wales to the Court House green in Peterboro, as Victoria Park was then known. His grandson received a silver medal from King George V about two months

### Municipal Offices.

When the Bank of Toronto occupied the premises that are now the city clerk, once at Water and Simcoe streets was a stage in Peterboro's progress mentioned by Mr. Lundy as a reminder for older residents and a bit of information for the present generation. Next to the bank was the fire hall in the days of the volunteer brigade. Daniel Hopkins, father-in-law of the late Senator George A. Cox, had a harness shop next to the fire hall, and John Carnegie a flour and feed shop where citizens now pay their light and water bills. After Mr. Carnegie the flour and feed shop was carried on by Walter Beal, father of Harry Beal, whose offices are now in the same location. Sir Joseph Flyavelle was the next occupant and eventually Charles Brown took over the feed store. On the second floor was the office of the town clerk. Mr. Edwards, father of Colonel E. B. Edwards; but at another date the municipal offices were in the Bradburn building, across the hall from John Hornsby's offices, and facing on the market. Council meetings were held there in older days, and David Hatton, father of the late George W. Hatton, K.C., held court as magistrate in a room at the end of the hall. William Arnott was the town's only police constable. The lock-up was part of the SjeMU. Mr. Amott supplemented his police salary as a baker on Aylmer street in a building that was torn down to provide the site of Silverwood's Dairy.

### First Canadian Cents.

James Henry was the first market clerk I can remember." Mr. Lundy concluded. "The first Canadian cents I saw were a bagful he got to make change on the market. Mr. Henry was the father of and he lived to the house on the south side of Charlotte street, west of Chemey's store. It was quite a fine house to its day. The new money came into use after Confederation, if my memory serves me right, but for a time pounds, shillings, pence were still currency until they finally disappeared."

## Ivan O'Beirne

*Elwood H. Jones*

Ivan O'Beirne (1820-1874), a native of Enniskillen, Ireland, was well-known around Peterborough where he had been in 1851 the second teacher at the Common School. He was an attorney by 1851, and alderman, 1860-1863 for the south ward, and had a career that included secretary to the school board, and clerk of the County and Surrogate Courts, and secretary treasurer to the Peterborough Town Trust, all positions that he held when he died after a prolonged illness in July 1874. He was Peterborough's leading calligrapher and at Trent Valley Archives we have a fine example of his workmanship in the charter for the creation of the County of Peterborough, 9 December 1849. He was survived by his wife, Ann, and three children: Andrew, 25, a bank clerk; Frances, 23, who married Robert Blackwell, the promising Peterborough architect, in 1877; and Ivan, 21. Dr. H. C. Burritt described the cause of death as Psoas abscess. The inscription in Little Lake Cemetery reads "Ivan O'Beirne, son of the late Rev. Andrew O'Beirne, D.D. Of Enniskillen."

According to the Cleveland Clinic, Psoas syndrome is an uncommon, and often misdiagnosed, condition that can appear as refractory lower back pain (pain that stays even after treatment) accompanied by other symptoms. The condition occurs when the psoas muscle—the long muscle (up to 16 inches) in your back—is injured. The psoas muscle is located in the lower lumbar region of the spine and extends through the pelvis to the femur. This muscle works by flexing the hip joint and lifting the upper leg towards the body. A common example of the movement created from this muscle is walking.



O'Beirne lived in the house at the north-east corner of Dalhousie and Aylmer, now 206 Aylmer, is the Madge house. Martha Kidd, *Peterborough's Architectural Heritage*, 8, describes the house: "Huge logs and hand hewn timbers were used in the construction of this house, built in 1834 for Colonel Robert P. Madge. One of the oldest houses in the city, the house originally comprised the large square front part and was finished with rough cast. At that time, the windows on three sides were French doors opening onto the upper and lower verandahs. The kitchen wing was added by 1875. Later, the upper verandah was removed and bays and different sheathing added."

*Photo Stephen Kylie. Steve Kylie moved his law office into the building in 2011. I have had a guided tour of the house and was impressed with the love of history by Steve and his wife.*



## Julian's Landing 1876

Henry Speid

*Editor's comment. The following is a letter written by Henry Speid to his friend Alexander Hood, in Lisbon, Portugal. The letter describes what later was known as Mount Julian and Viamede on the north shore of Stony Lake. Speid was the owner of the property, in South Burleigh, at that time. The letter surfaced during an archaeological study in 2000 of the property by Gord Dibb and York North Archaeological Services. The covering letter from Janet Motyer, Lennoxville, is of interest as well, and two pertinent paragraphs are presented here as an introduction to the Speid letter.*

"I am also sending a transcript of Henry Speid's letter to a friend in Lisbon which is dated February 1876. It is one of the few personal letters he made copies of and in it he describes the property which he owned at what was then called Julian's Landing which seems to be the likeliest place for him to have found something like the carving. He had another investment in a farm in the municipality of Burleigh but there is no record of his actually visiting it. He made these investments in the 10-year period when he owned and lived at "Sunnyside" in Toronto which was from 1869 to 1879. He returned to Scotland for a brief time during which he loaned Sunnyside to the Sisters of St. Joseph with a promise that if he sold it they would have first choice as they wanted it for an orphanage. This in fact was what he did. He married and settled in Montreal in 1881 and moved to Lennoxville about 189. I do not know exactly when any Ontario properties other than the house in Toronto were sold but he died in 1904 and they were not part of his estate then.

"Very little is known about his life after he left Scotland and started travelling – he went to South America for a very short time but didn't like the climate and decided to stay in Canada.. .."

### Henry Speid to Alexander Hood

Julian's Landing  
By Lakefield P. O. Ontario Canada  
22<sup>nd</sup> Feb. 1876

My Dear Sir

I have yours of 15<sup>th</sup> Jany – you will think I have been very negligent in not writing you sooner and I certainly ought but I have had it in my mind and put off from day to day. Letter writing is not my forte – I am apt to defer it too long with all my acquaintances.

I have shut up my house at Toronto and have made this place a temporary sojourn – I do not know that I shall remain here long. You speak of Lisbon being dull, but I do not know what you would think of this place. I usually prefer retirement but it is rather too retired here at present. I dare say we spoke of this place to you. It is pretty well into the backwoods and as I like lake scenery I am here again on the edge of a lake (Stony Lake) which I doubt you will find in a map. It is 25 miles n.e. of Peterboro'. The lake is dotted with island and rocks, a very picturesque scene but now wintery and solitary, being covered with about 18 inches of ice and snow. The "village" consists of three houses. One a large summer hotel, shut up in winter. It has been in operation two summers and I understand has proved a bad spec. Next an hostelry for the teams going and coming from the lumber shanties one or two of which may sometimes be seen crossing and recrossing the lake, and third the one owned by your humble servant. The style of it I think must be called ramshackle, one rather in favour in these parts. The party that is tenant of it who is a carpenter, made it a small temperance place of entertainment for summer tourists and was about to vacate and proceed to the next town for the winter but in my present humor I easily persuaded him to trade, being every where very dull this winter, to remain on in the prospect of my boarding in the house, and so I have given him some employment in "pinning" this building. I believe he has earned more than if had gone elsewhere. The house being a very tumble down affair required much repair to make it habitable for a Canadian winter, and indeed is barely as yet – only that we have plenty of wood to burn, 1 ½ dollars per cord, the cost of cutting – I am at present getting lumber from the nearest saw mill to put up a small addition, and I have been amusing myself preparations for maple sugar-making when the season arrives which should be about a month hence, upon a lot which I own about two miles off – building a shanty to boil in and getting paths brushed thro' among the trees for a sleigh and getting the necessary apparatus. I have no taste for hunting, besides it is a closed season now. We have been trying to fish through holes in the ice but had no success and our neighbours very little. Time passes wonderfully quick however, tho' I believe this extreme solitude is apt to have a bad effect on the nervous system. I may say I have no company at all – unless the

newspapers and magazines and some books, but I believe I would have been no better this winter in the little town or, for that matter, in Toronto. We have had an unusually open winter, but very changeable, it having rained and thawed a great deal in place of the usual snow and steady frost. This has been unfavourable for the business transactions of this country which depend much on good roads in winter – for the sleighing has consequently been bad. Now however we have lots of snow – I should think at present about 1 ft. 8 inches where it has not drifted. The mild weather has at times made the ground bare altogether and thereby exposed the wheat to occasional spells of severe frost. A few days we would have the thermometer as high as 40° with soft rain, then an interval of frost when my register would mark in the morning perhaps 10° to 15° below zero. The lowest I have observed here this winter has been about 21° below zero. This evening while I write it is just at 0°. In winter when the lake bears to drive across we are fifteen miles from Lakefield the nearest post town, and the last two summers there has been a bi-weekly steamer between this landing and Lakefield but in the spring and fall for a period of perhaps a month or more when there is neither navigation nor safe ice there is no access here but by a long route of about 22 miles over road that are a caution, so at such times the denizens of these parts are pretty well shut out from the world.

I got your letter in July last. The seeds were sown in a hot bed in spring and only two sorts grew, the one resembling flax – the other like a convolvulus, or what we call morning glory both seemingly annuals. When planted out in the flower plots they formed rather a pretty and a curious addition. When I left they had still survived any frosts – but they would not ripen seed.

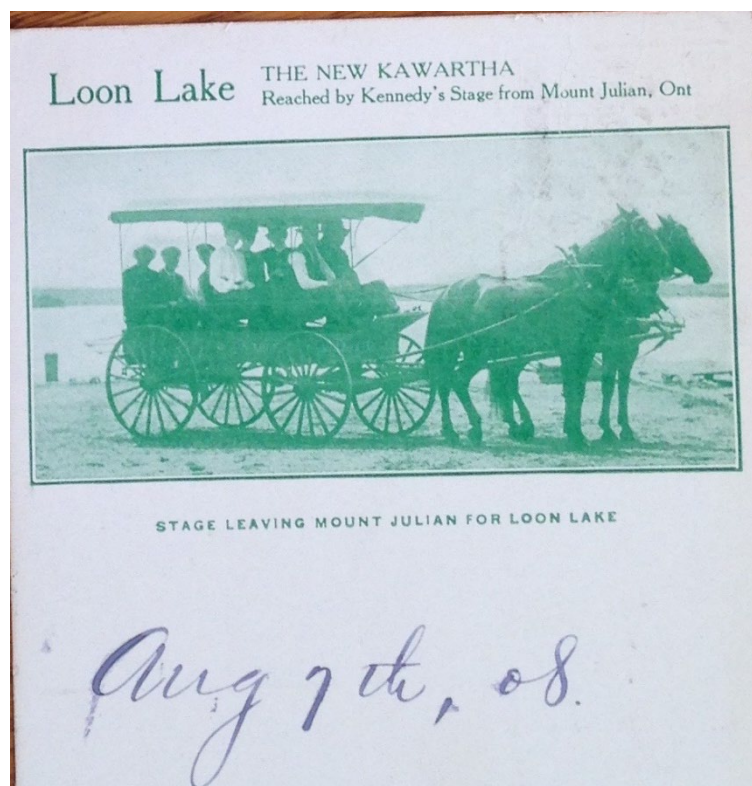
I congratulate you and Mr. Oakley on your success in business which I am glad to hear of. The successful business and returning health are a great set-off against the dullness you complain of. I am glad to hear that Mr. Oakley is continuing in .....

This is an exceptionally long letter for me and I conclude by reciprocating your and your partner's kind wishes and shall be glad to hear again of your continued welfare &c.

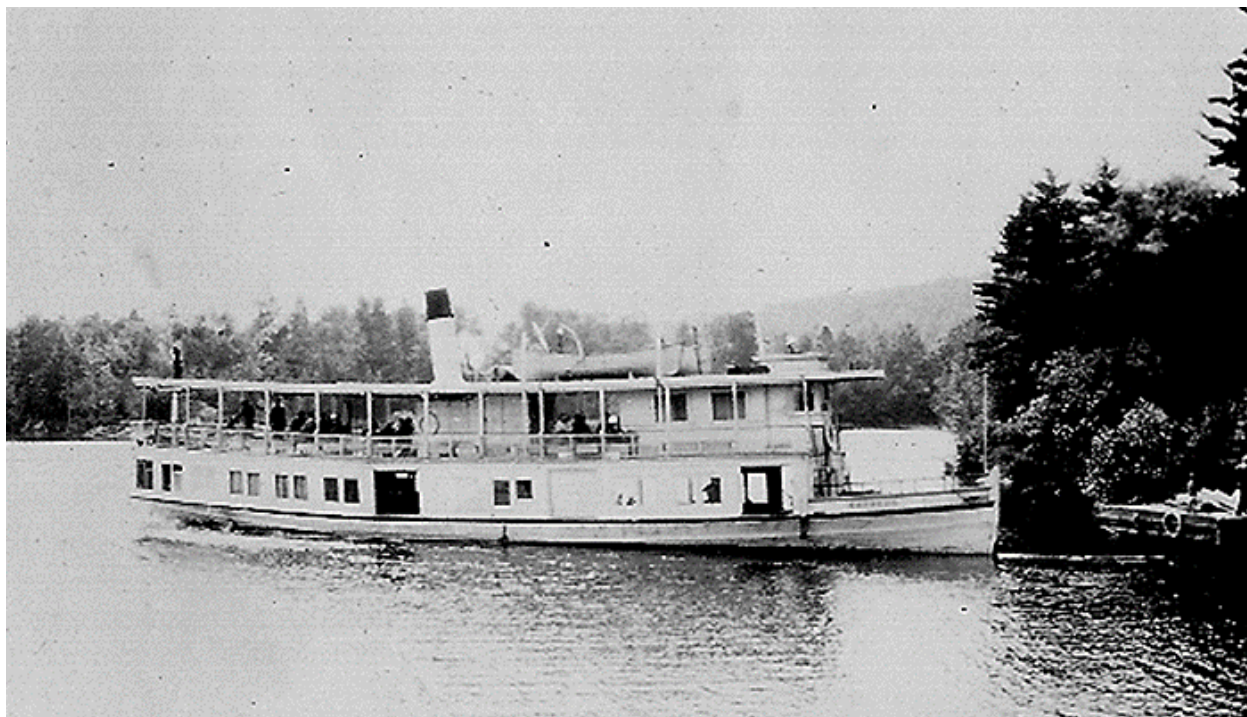
Yours very truly

Henry Speid

P. S. What you remark about the length of day and night in Portugal of course applies here also, for here too we are in a lower latitude than Scotland this being about 45 1/2. When I go next to Peterboro' I shall endeavour to procure a few stereoscopic views of this neighborhood & send to you.







*The Empress at Casement Island, in Upper Stoney Lake.*

In Lakefield in July 1899 Captain William V. Reynolds launched the steel frame *Empress*, 93 feet in keel, 57.48 tons capacity, and with a crew of five or six, the finest steamboat on the Trent Lakes before the *Stoney Lake* was launched in 1904. It was sold to the Boyd family for their Trent Valley Navigation Company in 1903. The *Empress* ran aground near Eagle Mount in 1906 battling a Stoney Lake gale. In the 1920s the *Empress*, then owned by the Youngs, had a route from Mount Julian to Lakefield to meet the 7 a.m. train to Lakefield, then spent the day calling at resorts and cottages and then meet the 4:40 train at Lakefield. The *Empress* sadly ended in a fire in August 1929. (Trent Valley Archives, Berry fonds)



*Mount Julian - Ont. 1.*

*- Roy Studio*

TVA 503

## Peyton Shewen was Sam Slocum

Elwood H. Jones

Peyton Shewen, the village Solon of Apsley, is nearly invisible in our local histories. Mary and Doug Lavery, in their book *Up The Burleigh Road ... beyond the boulders*, have several references to Shewen. He was postmaster of Apsley from 1875 to 1879, and was elected to the municipal council in 1875 and became the municipal clerk in 1879. As post master, Shewen succeeded Henry Eastland and preceded Thomas Eastland. On Dominion Day, 1876, Shewen was captain of one of the cricket teams playing a match on the field next to the Apsley town hall. In 1899, the Township of Burleigh and Anstruther asked Shewen to write a pamphlet that would persuade Englishmen to emigrate to the area north of Stoney lake. The title summarized the pamphlet: "A Circular to old Countrymen with some means who wish to emigrate: 'The Backwoods of Canada as a Home.'" After the death of his wife, the former Annie Eastland, Peyton Shewen moved to Mount Julian.

Mulvany's 1885 history of Peterborough county contains other useful information. Peyton William Charles Shewen was a Welshman born in Gosport, England in 1853. Both parents had strong military backgrounds, and his early education was done by governesses and then for six years and six months he attended the Royal Naval School, a boarding school at New Cross, near London. He had two years training in the Royal Artillery, and then took a leave of absence, converted to a resignation, to accompany his older brother as they emigrated directly to the village of Apsley. He quickly became familiar with the hunting and fishing of the area and both remained lifelong passions. In 1875, he married Annie Eastland, daughter of Thomas Eastland, of Peterborough, and they had four children. The Shewens lived in the town of Peterborough for two years, returning to Apsley when Peyton Shewen became the municipal clerk. Mulvany said Shewen had a "naturally quiet and unobtrusive disposition."

Shewen is more visible in the archives. The Trent Valley Archives is home to the historical records of Burleigh, Chandos and Anstruther, but Shewen mainly shows as an administrator. He was a freeholder whose farm in 1901 was in Burleigh Township, concession 16, lot 23. In the voters' list for 1903 Shewen was a farmer with two other Shewens, Cecil and Traves, farming just south of Apsley in Burleigh Township. A few years ago, the Trent Valley Archives received a box of newspaper clippings which had been kept by Peyton Shewen. On close examination, the yellowed papers revealed information about Shewen

Some of the clippings related to an ongoing

column that appeared in the Peterborough *Morning Times*. "The Lime Juice Club" was written in a style that parodied minutes of a fraternal society. The Peterborough Museum and Archives has two scrapbooks of clippings related to the column, and the columns appeared between 1886 and 1910. The museum does not know the provenance of the two scrapbooks. The archivist who accessioned the scrapbooks thought the Lime Juice Club was a temperance club that met regularly and that its secretary had a good sense of humour.

The Lime Juice Club did not exist as a club. Rather, it was a newspaper device for discussing current affairs obliquely and satirically. The meetings are always held at the "Hall of Wisdom" which does not exist, but which could be a dig at the various fraternal halls in downtown Peterborough, usually on the upper floors of the commercial buildings. In a typical account in February 1899, the Hall of Wisdom is described as being "crowded to the doors" and the visitors gallery included some well-known and real local names such as W. H. Bradburn, "Town Clerk Armstrong," Macfarlane Wilson, W. A. Sanderson and W. J. Green. "After Bro. Croft had settled himself back for his first nap, and Bro. Ed Brown had his feet comfortably down into Bro. R. S. Davidson's new Sunday plug hat, the President began:" The speaker of the evening was Professor Hank Johnson of Hastings, on "The Goneness of the Past" who was well-known for his theories and for skinning a woodchuck "in seven minutes by the town clock." The rambling talk illustrates you cannot find history because it is gone. For example, he asked "Do you see Napoleon Bonaparte hanging around the Snowden House or Bro. Sam Ray waiting for a game of pedro?"

The papers at the Trent Valley Archives include some samples of the newspaper writing style of Sam Slocum, the nom de plume of Peyton Shewen. In 1899, for example, he wrote a letter to the editor appealing for a "railroad to the back country", namely to Apsley. He said there was no point waiting for the town of Peterboro, which lacks foresight and good sense. He congratulated the energetic Peterborough County Commissioner T. G. Eastland who had proposed a CPR link from Norwood. Among other things, this route he noted would bring the train to the head of Stony Lake "where steamers would meet the campers to take them to any part of the lake." CPR would find such a line was "payable" because of the dairying and farm produce and the tourists during the summer, and by moving cordwood and minerals in the other seasons. About a month later, he wrote a letter to

the Norwood Register on the same issue. Here, he emphasized the value to Norwood and pointed out that Peterborough did not see the value of the project. "This country must have railroad connection with the front. Why not with Norwood?" From there, goods could be shipped to and from the back country. Then, Shewen thought, Norwood would soon have factories and every line of business and be "on the list of the cities of Ontario." He says he has been a close observer of the scene for 27 years, and knows this is the time to "be able to say, 'Here comes the train from Norwood.'" Shewen was boosting Apsley while flattering Norwood.

The Peyton Shewen papers has the handwritten copy of a special column that also appeared in the *Morning Times* in October 1903. The story, "A Summer Outing," was written with evident ease. There were few corrections to the text. Charles Dickens, who also wrote with ease, often changed or corrected his words. This article appeared in the *Morning Times* the day it arrived. Clearly there was a close relationship between W. H. Robertson, the publisher of the *Times*, and Shewen. The column is written as an essay telling the high points of a spur of the moment trip to Canada from New York state. Frank and Eddie took a steam boat, the "North King," from Charlotte to Port Hope, by train to Lakefield, where they stayed a night at Craig's brick hotel. The next morning they caught the Steamer "Majestic" and after several stops reached McCracken's

Landing where they noted Fred Morgan's summer hotel, which was full of Americans. They also commented on Juniper Island, but their destination was Mount Julian. Their host, Harry Mann, showed them to a cottage near the main building. Our tourist also noted Viamede which was run by the Grahams.

Frank and Eddie hired a local guide who gave them advice on baits and trolling and took all that was necessary for a shore dinner. The impressive shore dinner, "fit for a king," was cooked by the guide and consisted of fresh fish, boiled potatoes, fried bacon and eggs, bread and butter, cheese, apple pie with bananas, and coffee. After a remarkable fishing day near Burleigh Falls, the tourists visited Burleigh Falls hotel "kept by Mr. Tom Darcy and his son." The week flew quickly and Frank and Eddie left with the greatest regret.

This fictional story was designed to promote Stoney Lake. Shewen was again writing in a booster style. He was doing something he had done often. With these firm examples tied to Shewen, it now seems worth looking at the Lime Juice Club columns with a close eye and ear. Sam Slocum may have been the main voice behind the Lime Juice Club. Peyton Shewen was Sam Slocum.

#### 67-004

##### CITY ARCHIVES - PETERBOROUGH / PMA

##### Title

Lime Juice Club fonds, 1886-1910

2 bound scrapbooks

##### Admin\_Bio History

note: biographical sketch/administrative history either in development or not applicable in this record.

##### Custodial History

Scrapbooks managed by members of the Lime Juice Club; source prior to acquisition by PCMA are unknown.

##### Scope and Content

Two volumes of scrapbooks containing newspaper summaries of the meetings of the Lime Juice Club of Peterborough, between 1886 and 1910. The members of the club met to discuss social and political issues of the day in a light-hearted manner. The reports of the meetings were published in the "Peterborough Review" newspaper and were written in an absurd sort of way.

The club originally met to deal with the Scott Act, one of the early prohibition Acts which went into effect in 1886.

##### Source of Title

Title based on contents of the fonds.

##### Physical Characteristics

originals

scrapbooks

##### Restrictions

open access

##### Finding Aids

no

##### Accruals

closed



## ROBERT W. R. GRUBBE.

*Examiner, 26 October 1923, p.15*

The death occurred at Nicholls Hospital this morning of Robert William Radcliffe Grubbe, who for nearly sixty years has been a resident of Peterboro. For the past few days he had not been feeling well, and last night was taken to Nicholls Hospital, and slept peacefully to his rest shortly after nine o'clock this morning.



*Above, Horsenden House; Below, R. W. R. Grubbe at Haselwood Lodge, 1900 (TVA, H. H. Grubbe, F 910)*



Grubbe. Sir Richard Radcliffe was the ancestor of the Earl of Derwentwater. The late Robert William Grubbe was a nephew of the late Hon. Heath Haviland, Lieutenant - Governor of Prince Edward Island, and one of the Fathers of Confederation.

The deceased was born at Madras, India, on the 27th of April. 1844, the second son of Captain William Henry Grubbe, of the Honorable East



India Company Artillery, by his first wife, Elizabeth Conwell, daughter of Anthony Conwell, of “The Hermitage,”\* Dungannon, Ireland, and grandson of Captain John Grubbe of ‘Horsendon Manor,’ Buckinghamshire. He was christened at the Cathedral at Madras by the Rev. Arthur Morris, M.A.

Shortly afterward, his mother died, and he was taken to England, then came to Barrie, Canada, and when a very young lad, entered the Hudson Bay Company, then joined the staff of the Bank of Toronto at Montreal. He joined the Victoria Rifles and was a veteran of the Fenian Raid, 1866.

He was transferred to Peterboro, and shortly afterward married Ada Louise Haselwood Wrighton, daughter of William Wrighton (clerk of the peace, deputy clerk of the Crown). Mrs. Grubbe died on May 19, 1919.

For nearly forty years the late R. W. Grubbe was connected with the Bank of Toronto, Peterboro, and was so well-known in town and country that it became known as “Grubbe’s Bank.” He loved nature and little children. He was a member of the Church of England until his marriage, when he became a member of St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, under the Rev. D. L. Macdonell, and later went to St. Paul’s Church.

He leaves two sons to mourn his loss: Eustace Haselwood Grubbe, of Vancouver, and Harry Haviland Grubbe, of Toronto, and three grandchildren : Elizabeth, John and Barbara Grubbe, of Vancouver, B.C. The funeral will take place from his late residence, 47 McDonnel Street, on Monday, October 29<sup>th</sup>.

#### DIED

GRUBBE — On Friday morning, October 26<sup>th</sup>., 1923, at Nicholls Hospital, Peterborough, Robert William Grubbe, second son of Captain William Henry Grubbe of the Honourable East India Company Artillery and grandson of Captain John Grubbe of “Horsendon Manor” Buckinghamshire, England. Funeral from 47 McDonnel street on Monday afternoon at half past two.



*Haselwood Lodge, Grubbe Island, Upper Stoney Lake. Notice the tower wing has been built. This property was one of the puzzles chosen for the TVA Heritage series, but the puzzle picture precedes the building of the tower wing. (TVA, H. H. Grubbe, F910)*



*Another view of Haselwood Lodge, (TVA, H. H. Grubbe fonds, F 910)*

#### A PIONEER RESIDENT.

One by one the pioneer residents of Peterborough are passing on, leaving gaps in the ranks that seem difficult to fill.

The latest to whom death’s summons has suddenly come was one of the best known citizens of Peterborough, Mr. R. W. Grubbe, for many years connected with the Bank of Toronto here and a familiar figure on the streets of the city. Although born in India, Mr. Grubbe had been a resident of Canada since his early boyhood, and for sixty years, from 1863 onward, except for a short

time in Montreal, had lived in Peterborough.

Few citizens were better known. He was a man of gentle habits, of geniality and good humour, “filled with the milk of human kindness.” On speaking terms with nearly everybody, he took an especial interest in children, and the little folks will miss his warm smile and the kindly questions with which he greeted them. His services in the years gone by were always at the disposal of all enterprises and of local organizations where volunteer work was needed, and although he never sought public office, he was nevertheless a useful and worthy citizen during the six decades in which he lived in Peterborough.

Mr. Grubbe was one of the few survivors of the Peterborough quota which was called out for service at the time of the Fenian Raid in 1866, most of the veterans having passed over to the great majority.



*47 McDonnel Street, was built for W. H. Wrighton who lived at 45 on the left, and Robert Grubbe and family lived at 47 on the right. In 1870 the house was assessed at \$1,400 for each half. (Elwood Jones)*

#### LAID TO REST

Examiner, 29 October 1923

The funeral of the late R. W R Grubbe was held at 2.30 this afternoon from the family residence, 47 McDonnel Street, to the Little Lake Cemetery, Rev. Robert Pogue of St Paul's Church, and Rev. Dr. Blagrove of St John's Church, officiating. The pall-bearers were J. C. Smith, Robert Fair, George Gladman, E. J. G. Vanstone of the Bank of Toronto, and H. W. Baldwin, of Toronto. [47 McDonnel was at the top of the street at Dickson Street.]





## News, Views and Reviews

### Moving The House on Monaghan

Ruth Thompson



My latest family history project is a 60-page coffee table book about a house that was owned by four women in my family over a span of almost 75 years. The house appeared in Romaine's Map of the Town of Peterborough, 1874, at Lot 34 on the east side of Monaghan Road between Chamberlain Street and the current location of Albert Street which was extended to Monaghan Road in the 1940's. The Trent Valley Archives supplied three integral pieces for this project.

The first was the Peterborough County Land Record which had a few recognizable names - William Hall, Robert Nicholls, and James Z. Rogers. James sold the house to my Great-Great Grandmother,

Margaret Nichol King Breckenridge in 1887, and then it went in succession to both her daughters and then to my grandmother's sister, Marg Irwin. In 1961 the Cangeco Credit Union came calling when they were looking for a property for their new building that was off the main GE site but close to it for the convenience of their customers who were GE employees. Aunt Marg told me that they made an offer she couldn't refuse.

The house appeared in the *CGE Peterborough Works News* of 12 January 1962, with the announcement that it was set for demolition, but then the writer asked, "Any takers?" Happily, there was a



taker, and the house was moved to a new location. I was 8 when I watched Mom cut the “House on the Move” clipping out of the *Peterborough Examiner* which is in our family collection. I knew it had to be from the spring of 1962 because there wasn’t any snow in the photo. I thought that it was on the front page below the fold but questioned that memory. I had to find the date, but could I also find a better-quality photo as well? It had to be somewhere. The text was not helpful in dating the clipping but was an interesting accompaniment:

“HOUSE ON THE MOVE - Motorists driving on Monaghan Rd. early today did a double take when they saw this brick house advancing down the road. The home, owned by Grant Earl of 636 Brown St., was moved from its old location on the east side of Monaghan Rd. just south of Albert st. to a lot adjoining Mr. Earl's Brown St. home. A two-storey credit union office will be built on the vacant Monaghan Rd. lot. Bell Telephone, PUC and Cable TV linemen cleared the route of low overhead wires before the move.”

In very small letters on the bottom right side of the clipping photo in brackets was “Yunge-Bateman Photo.” It didn’t take a lot of Googling to find out that Nicholas Yunge-Bateman had been a staff photographer and reporter for The Examiner and that his collection was housed at the TVA. A note to Heather Aiton Landry, Associate Archivist at the TVA with the details was sent. She wrote back that it took a lot of digging to find it and sent a big, beautiful and totally awesome photo of the house on its way to its new location!

Three generations lived at the house on Monaghan Road and another two were welcomed there with open arms. The book includes around 250 photos – most are of family members, but a few were of friends from the neighbourhood. The third integral piece from the TVA was the collection of Peterborough Directories that were contributed to and available at Archive.org. The Street Directories were particularly helpful in tracking such things as the comings and goings of family members, when they were first listed as working and where and what they were doing and when a telephone was installed. The directories recorded the comings and goings in the neighbourhood such as the opening and closing of the Brownston Post Office, when the Mansion on Monaghan Road - the Waddell house - was built and then demolished, when the houses along Monaghan Road were renumbered and where the friends found in the photos lived along Monaghan Road and Chamberlain Street.

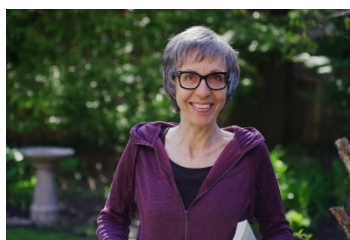
The book will be a treasured by family members for years to come. The people and resources at the TVA have made an enormous impact on this project and I extend my sincerest thanks to all.

## Trent Valley Archives on Zoom

Trent Valley Archives continued to have special Zoom events for its members, a tradition that began with the pandemic. Our most recent presentations were in August and October. We showed the excellent TV show “Spanning 100 Years” produced by YourTV in co-operation with Trent Valley Archives and which was featured on local TV during August. For the Zoom event, Elwood H. Jones made comments about the history of the Ashburnham Bridge. Marcus Ferguson shared many insights about the production.

In October, the special guest was Matthew Griffiths, former professor of libraries at the University of Southern Mississippi, talked about his fascination with the world of post cards, and about his publications on postcards in Peterborough and the Kawarthas and New Orleans. He touched on the development of post cards from business notices to photographic and lithographed works of art. A method of business communication became a favourite with tourists. He discussed some of the local photographers and book sellers in Peterborough who were linked to the golden age of postcards.

The upcoming Zoom presentation for December will feature Kathryn Storrington talking about the life and legacy of Ruth (Birdsall) Elmhurst, 1888-1974. Her new book *Life & Legacy*, is a loving tribute to her grandmother, Ruth (Birdsall) Elmhurst, whose life was forever changed in 1947 when surgery left her paralysed.



Kathryn will explore her creative journey, which started with a cache of old letters that introduced her to the grandmother behind the shadow of her disabilities. She will share lessons learned about research, process – and about the Peterborough County roots that bind her present to the past.



Members will receive registration for the presentation by email about a week before the event, taking place on

The Zoom Event takes place on December 9. See you there.

## Harry Holbrook's Great War Adventure

Michael C. Doran

This story comes out of my research into the biographies of some of the young men with whom my great-uncle Nicholas Scott was acquainted while growing up in the Chandos/Apsley/Young's Point area, training and shipping out with them to the battlefields of Europe in July 1916 as a Private in the 93<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Battalion and then engaging in battle during the few months before he was killed in early May 1917. One of those comrades-in-arms was Harry Holbrook.



*Apsley General Store (TVA)*

Harry Andrew Holbrook signed up in Peterborough as Private 195513 in the 93<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion on 21 December 1916. His Attestation Paper shows he was born 23 June 1897 in Anstruther, Peterborough County, Ontario, and that's where a long story begins. His parents were James Holbrook and Hannah Shouldice, née Wilson, an early 1870s immigrant from Donegal, Ireland. It turned out, in a roundabout way described below, and easily confirmed by the public record, that Harry was born fully five years later, 23 June 1902 and was only 13 years 6 months old when he enlisted, well below "military age" of 18 years. His mother Hannah died 28 May 28 1915 and was listed as a widow at the time of her death. But, complicating matters, she was already a 34-year-old widow when she married Harry's father, James, a 69-year-old widower and music teacher/farmer, on 16 January 1896. Harry's father, too, had died prior to his enlistment, but no public death record nor mention of his death in the Peterborough newspapers could be found. Harry was thinking of the military life, at least in a small way, when he made the news in a very brief appearance in the local media just prior to signing up. Harry Holbrook, Burleigh had

donated 10 cents to the Overseas Tobacco Fund.<sup>81</sup>

Harry described himself as a farmer on enlistment with the 93<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, his enlistment document signed by Capt. J. E. R. Munro, who apparently did not notice anything unusual about the recruit. Capt. Munro was a school teacher prior to his own enlistment, so you might think he would have been able to spot a 13½-year old boy attempting to enlist as an 18-year old. Harry gave his intended destination on arrival back in Canada as a farm in Apsley, owned by his half-brother, G. [George] Shouldice, and next of kin as his sister M. [Mary Anne] Holbrook, who lived in Toronto as of the 6 September 1917 the date of the "Confidential Information" document in his military record. It may be significant that on that same document, completed about a week after his arrival back from England, the interviewer noted that "He looks the age stated in

birth certificate" which probably refers to the birth document described below, sent from the Township Clerk of Anstruther.

Pte. Holbrook was hospitalized in April 1916 before shipping out, and in late August, shortly after his arrival in England he contracted German measles but was pronounced "fit for duty" on 11 September 1916. That medical document shows his age as 15, a bit of a stretch from his real age of 14 years, 3 months. Unlike his comrades in the 93<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, all of whom were transferred into active Battalions such as the 18<sup>th</sup> Canadian Battalion shortly after arrival in England, Harry lingered in the Canadian Army Service Corps (CASC; Eastern Ontario Regimental Depot) from his arrival on 25 July 1916 until March 1917. To begin a series of transfers, all of them safely behind the front lines, he was attached to the Alberta Regimental Depot on 6 March 1917, then transferred back to the Eastern Ontario Regimental Depot (EORD), being taken on strength there on 17 May 1917. On 23 June 1917 he was struck off strength of the EORD and taken on

<sup>81</sup> 3,000 PACKAGES OF TOBACCO SENT TO LOCAL BOYS AT FRONT, *Evening Examiner*, Peterborough Tuesday, 14 December 1915, page eight.

strength of the 6<sup>th</sup> Reserve Battalion.

At this point, the only thing that is clear is that they don't know what to do with this child. Some creative record keeping and "rearranging of history" happened next: A hand-written entry dated "20/7/17" shows Harry being struck off strength of the 6<sup>th</sup> Reserve Battalion, but the "20" in the date appears to have been crossed out. The next entry is dated 17 March 1917 (although it follows entries for later dates) and declares that Harry was taken on strength of the EORD on 9 May 1917, even though the record shows that on that date he was still attached to the Alberta Regimental Depot. The next entry, written on 27 May 1917, quotes an order dated 27 July 1917 sending Pte. Holbrook to the Canadian Discharge Depot, pending return to Canada. He embarked for Canada from Liverpool on the Megantic on 14 August 1917, by which time he was 15 years and (almost) 2 months of age, arriving in Quebec on 27 August 1917.<sup>82</sup>

To add to the confusion, the manifest of the Megantic showed Harry as 195513 E. O. Holbrook. An entry on 28 August 1917 from the Discharge Depot in Kingston says he was "Found fit for Duty"; nevertheless, he was discharged from the military on 5 March 1918. His "Proceedings on Discharge" document shows his final "Squadron, Battery or Company" as the No. 3 Casualty Unit and his age on discharge as 15 years, 8 months. He was discharged "in consequence of minority"; in other words, he was too young for military service. A document, signed and sealed by the Township Clerk and Division Registrar for the Township of Anstruther, dated 11 May 1917, gives Mr. Holbrook's date of birth as 23 June 1902, making him 13 years and 6 months old when he enlisted, and that date of birth agrees with the public record.

How could Capt. J. E. R. Munro, a school teacher who dealt with children every day, have mistaken a 13-year old boy for an 18-year old? Why did the military ship him out in July 1916?

From 1 July 1916, the month the 93<sup>rd</sup> Battalion shipped out for England, part of Harry's wages were assigned to a Duncan Brown, Esq., in Apsley. According to the 1911 Canada Census, Mr. Brown lived very nearby Roy Coones, a friend of Nicholas Scott. There was a merchant named Duncan Brown living in Apsley at the time, married to a Louisa Wilson, daughter of Thomas Wilson and Betsy Bedford (Hannah's parents were Thomas and Sarah Wilson). Although both Hannah and Louisa had a father named

Thomas Wilson, Louisa's family was of Scottish origin and Hannah's family was Irish. Also, Louisa and Duncan were Presbyterian and Hannah was Anglican, so Hannah and Louisa likely were not sisters, and probably unrelated.

Harry's Attestation Paper shows his next of kin as "Hannah Mary Ann Holbrook", "Mother", but the problem is that his mother had died almost seven months before his enlistment. His "Particulars of Family of an Officer or Man Enlisted in C.E.F. [Canadian Expeditionary Force]" document, dated 17 May 1916 and signed off by Lt.-Col. T. J. Johnston, in question 13, asks "If you have no wife, father, mother or children, state the name and relationship with full postal address of your next of kin, to whom you would desire any communication to be sent concerning you." His answer, typed in, was "Holbrook, Hannah Mary Ann", with an undated and unattributed pencilled-in notation beside it of "sister". The name seems to be a conflation of Harry's mother's name, Hannah, and his sister's official name, Mary Anne. To make the picture clearer, the 1901 Canada Census shows Harry's mother Hannah, born 12 August 1863 in County Donegal, Ireland, having emigrated in 1872, married to James Holbrook, born October 24, 1826 and living in Burleigh Anstruther with children William, Thomas (named Johnnie on his birth record), George and Hannah. The three boys, William, Thomas and George, were from Hannah's previous marriage to James Shouldice and the child "Hannah" (whose official name was Mary Anne) was the mother's firstborn child with James Holbrook. The father of the three boys probably died sometime between the conception of George (October 1892) and Hannah's marriage to James Holbrook, 16 January 1896, but no death record could be found for him, nor could the record of his marriage to Hannah.

Ten years later, the 1911 Canada Census for Burleigh Anstruther shows Hannah Holbrook, an Irish immigrant of 1871 [sic], widowed, age 45 [sic], working 70 hours per week as a Domestic while living with Lewis Coones, along with her two children, Hannah, age 12 and Harry, age 8, as lodgers. No information could be found about where the boys from her previous marriage, William, Thomas and George were living at the time, but they were probably nearby, and probably living with relatives (Harry meets up with one of them later in this story.) The death record for James Holbrook could not be found, but he must have died sometime between Harry's conception (September 1901) and the completion of the 1911 census, when Hannah was listed as widowed. On both censuses, Hannah gave her daughter's name as Hannah instead of Mary Anne. The enumerator in the 1911 census is shown as none other than Duncan Brown.

The official, public record shows that Harry

<sup>82</sup> (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/immigration/immigration-records/passenger-lists/passenger-lists-1865-1922/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=6859&>).



had a sister, Mary Anne, born August 8, 1898, and his response to question 13 on the “Particulars of Family of an Officer or Man Enlisted in C.E.F.” document seems to have been intended to declare her as his next of kin. Like all of the “other ranks” of Canadian soldiers, i.e., non-commissioned officers, he was paid a dollar a day, with an extra \$0.10 per day Field Allowance. His pay sheet shows his next of kin as Mary Ann [sic] Holbrook, “Mother” (instead of sister), and from 1 July 1916 until his last pay cheque; \$12 of his pay was assigned monthly to Duncan Brown. Mr. Brown’s relationship to Harry was listed as “Not known” and there is no indication of what credentials he may have shown to become the assignee. With no apparent direct relationship to Harry, it’s a mystery as to what service Mr. Brown was providing in return for receipt of those payments. Was he just a middle man between the military paymaster and Mary Anne? He was listed in a similar capacity for Bertie McIlmoyle, another of Nicholas Scott’s comrades in the 93<sup>rd</sup> Battalion.

Why didn’t Harry have his pay transferred to his sister, Mary Anne? The following story appeared in the Peterborough *Morning Times* newspaper, 31 July 1913, page eight:

**Holbrook Case Partly Settled.**

The case of Holbrook, the Children’s Aid Society has been settled, Magistrate Edmison having made an order to have the child in question become a ward of the Children’s Aid Society. The case arose primarily through a complaint that the little Holbrook girl was being neglected by her mother. In the investigation that followed it was discovered that the little girl would not reside with her mother because she claimed she was living with a man who was not her husband. The little girl was then brought to the Children’s Shelter, but her mother commenced an action in County Police Court to have her daughter returned to her. It is understood that the case of the little boy [Harry] has not been settled yet.

A newspaper story in The *Peterborough Morning Times*, Monday 17 April 1911, page 2, under “LATEST FROM APSLEY. PERSONAL NOTES.” mentioned that Hannah and her family had moved: “Mrs. Holbrook has removed from her farm in Anstruther and now resides in Burleigh, the family will be missed on the East road.”

The census taken that year, enumerated by Duncan Brown, showed that she and her two Holbrook children were living with Lewis Coones in Burleigh. The story of 31 July 1913 seems to refer to the altered living arrangements of Hannah and her children after

they moved from the farm in Anstruther to Burleigh.

It’s possible that as a ward of the Children’s Aid Society, Mary Anne would not have been eligible to receive Harry’s wartime wage payments. Another complication was that, not turning 18 until August 1916, she was a minor when Harry shipped out. Women, no matter their age, weren’t even allowed to vote in Ontario until 12 April 1917.<sup>83</sup> After that date, they had to be over 21 years of age, and not a resident of an asylum or charitable institution to vote (among other restrictions).

On his “Confidential Information” form, completed after he arrived back in Canada and dated Quebec, 6 September 1917, Harry listed Mary Anne’s address as 1154 Knight St. West, Toronto, but the Knight St. nearest to Toronto is actually in East York, and it runs north and south, not east and west. It is one block long, between Mortimer and Sammon Avenues, one block east of Coxwell Avenue. On a 1916 map of Toronto, the current location of Knight St. in East York shows up as only partly developed and not yet named.<sup>84</sup> Perhaps Harry meant 1154 King St. West.

These circumstances may explain why Duncan Brown showed up in the military records as the assignee of part of Harry’s pay: He may have been an intermediary between Harry and his sister, facilitating the movement of funds from Harry to Mary Anne. The last sentence of the July *Morning Times* story refers obliquely to Harry who, by implication, may also have been living at a Children’s Shelter.

The story of Mary Anne being put under the care of Children’s Aid was not the first about Hannah’s dealings with the Children’s Shelter. In 1903:

**THEFT IN CHANDOS**

**Two Boys Brought to Town by Mr. Cochrane**

Mr. Geo. Cochrane on Tuesday last had occasion to use his authority as High County Constable and as agent of the Children’s Aid Society at the same time. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of January there was taken from the premises of Wm. Wilson, in Chandos, five rope cow ties, four chains, one hand hay rake, one axe and helve, one hay and one manure fork. Suspicion pointed strongly to two boys, William and John Shouldice, aged 16 [actually

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<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/womens-suffrage-in-ontario>

84

[https://maps.library.utoronto.ca/datapub/digital/G\\_35\\_24\\_T6\\_16\\_1916.jpg](https://maps.library.utoronto.ca/datapub/digital/G_35_24_T6_16_1916.jpg).

15] and 15 [actually 13] years, step-sons of Jas. Holbrook, of Anstruther. Armed with a search warrant, and another to apprehend, Mr. Cochrane on Tuesday visited the Holbrooks, accompanied by Mr. Wilson, and found the missing articles. He happened to see, through the crack of a door, Mrs. Holbrook slip the axe underneath a bed tick, and she strenuously denied that the articles discovered were stolen. The Holbrook house, which is 12 miles from town, was by no means the most cleanly, and the boys never wore stockings until this winter. They are now at the Children's Shelter. When they were scrubbed and properly clothed, Mr. Cochrane said he did not know them. Other children of the Holbrook's will probably be brought to the shelter.<sup>85</sup>

Harry would have been 8 months old and Mary Anne would have been 4 years old at the time of this story. There was at least one Shouldice child, George, who would have been 10 years of age at the time (born 11 July 1892) and all three of them were probably taken to the shelter.

Considering his troubled childhood, and having recently become an orphan, it would not have been surprising if Harry wanted to try to change his fortune by enlisting in the military. Having lied about his age in order to be accepted by the military while underage, makes for a confusing story of his time in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Contributing to the story, there is also the issue of a recruit who was obviously a child being signed up as a soldier in a very hot war. It is baffling that the Canadian recruiter was fooled, but no one in England believed his stated age, nor did the people in Kingston when he got back from England, and it is an open question as to why Harry was able to make it through basic training and get shipped all the way to England before being found out.

Some of what follows is just guesswork, but here is a possible explanation for what happened: Harry, orphaned seven months previously, signed up with the 93<sup>rd</sup> Battalion in December 1915 at age 13½, without telling anyone close to him, trained with the Battalion in and around Peterborough County in the first half of 1916 and shipped out for England in mid-July before any family member had an opportunity to intervene. Anyone who knew him and happened to read

the *Evening Examiner*, 31 December 1915, should have noticed the story that listed him as a member of "C" Company, 93<sup>rd</sup> Overseas Battalion, C.E.F. Would they have thought "He's already had a rough life and now he's an orphan. Maybe the army is the best place for him"? At barely 14 years of age when he shipped out, someone, perhaps his sister Mary Anne, may have got involved and pulled strings to get him on a ship back to Canada. Harry was a comrade of Nicholas Scott in "C" Company of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Battalion: I wonder if Nicholas noticed that Harry was just a kid? Duncan Brown was already signed up to receive transfers of part of Harry's pay before Harry shipped out, so it seems likely that he knew about Harry's departure. Shouldn't he have known how young Harry was, having been the census enumerator in 1911, when he wrote down Harry's age of 8 years at the time? By the time the Clerk and Division Registrar of the townships of Burleigh and Anstruther wrote out Harry's official birth certificate, on May 11, 1917, Harry had been in England for almost ten months, but the document seems to have eventually made its way through military channels and resulted in Harry being sent back to Canada. That birth certificate is now part of Harry's official military record.

The *Evening Examiner*, 21 May 1918, reported that Harry had been admitted to the Peterborough branch of the Local Veterans association, along with his cousin George Shouldice. It's ironic that while more than two years shy of the legal military age, he was already considered a veteran of the Great War. The veterans also voted to ask that the Provincial Council at Hamilton to bring forward the issues of "Equality of Pensions" and the production of "Light Beer", viz., beer with 5% alcohol.

Harry's story could have had a much worse ending; imagine if he had been killed in action as a 14-year old! A few years after arriving back in Canada, he married Olive Margaret Heaton in Peterborough, November 1924; he had a job as a shipper at the time and she was employed as a machine operator. The public record doesn't show when or where he died, so he may have moved to the U.S. and one can only hope that his post-war life was an improvement over his first fifteen years.

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The sources for this story are as follows: Birth, marriage and death information usually comes from the digitized Provincial government microfilm records; census information comes exclusively from the Library and Archives Canada web site. For birth, marriage and death information, go to [familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org), on which the Ontario government has offloaded responsibility for record keeping. When information couldn't be found there, I used the most immediate alternate source, e.g., the Attestation Paper and other documents in the soldier's military record. All other

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<sup>85</sup> *Daily Evening Review*, Peterborough Saturday, February 14, 1903 page 5:

information came from local Peterborough newspaper accounts: *The Daily Evening Review*, the *Morning Times*; and the *Examiner*. I also consulted the earlier files for the *Peterboro Chronicle*, and the *Peterborough Despatch*, the *Weekly Despatch* and the *Weekly Review*. The mastheads for these papers sometimes changed. These newspapers are accessible and searchable on the internet at archive.org. All of these newspapers can be downloaded from internet at archive.org in PDF format. I used the OCR (optical character recognition) function of Adobe Reader to search these files for keywords, such as "Scott" and to convert text images into machine-readable format. The latter requires a lot of intervention (some records are almost completely illegible), so transcription errors may remain. These newspapers were copied to the internet from the files at the Peterborough Public Library and Trent Valley Archives and arranged by the Heritage Office of the City of Peterborough.

## Queries

### Pte. M. Massala

Query: I came to the Trent Valley Archives on August 4 and spent the afternoon looking over documents having to do with Italian immigrants in Peterborough. Since then, I have been scouring old issues of *The Peterborough Examiner* and found a lot of interesting information. One article from the April 18, 1917 issue mentions a Pte. M. Massala, an Italian resident of Peterborough who left with the 59th Battalion in August 1915 and was transferred to the 80th Battalion before going overseas. I've attached said article to this email. I have tried to learn more about this soldier by visiting websites such as Ancestry and Library and Archives Canada, but sadly, I have not been able to find any new information. I was hoping you might be able to look into the matter yourself if you're not too busy, or recommend some sources at the Archives that I might consult to aid in my research. Any assistance would be greatly appreciated. The article is reprinted here.  
Justin O'Brien

Answer: We were surprised that our sources on military history and on Italians in Peterborough could find no such name in their files. As well, the street directories contained no such names in 1916 and 1918. The usual sources yielded no information. We tried various spellings without success. The story was not carried in the *Daily Review*. The news clipping is quite interesting but we would like to confirm this story. If you have any knowledge of the family or this story please contact Trent Valley Archives, attention Elwood Jones.

### Research Room stories.

The Research Room is open for visitors. It is necessary to make appointments 705-745-4404 and Covid protocols are in effect.

The researchers over the last few months have had many interesting stories to share and many fascinating questions to pursue. One good example is a researcher seeking information about William Irwin and his wife

**LOCAL ITALIAN  
WHO FOUGHT WITH  
CANUCKS IS HOME**

**Pte. M. Massala Who Left Peterborough to Go Overseas With the 80th Battalion Was Wounded in France**

**TO GO TO KINGSTON**

Pte. M. Massala, an Italian resident of Peterborough, who believed that if Canada was good enough to live in she was good enough to fight for, and who carried out that principle by enlisting here for overseas service in August, 1915, arrived home last night, proudly wearing the gold casualty braid on his sleeve, signifying that he has been wounded. Pte. Massala, who before becoming a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, was employed at the Boston Cafe, left Peterborough with a draft for the 59th Battalion in August, 1915, and was transferred to the 80th Battalion, with which battalion he went overseas. On arrival in England he was drafted to another Canadian battalion and saw considerable service at the front before he was wounded in the shoulder and leg. He has been in hospital for some time and has to undergo further treatment at the Convalescent Hospital, Kingston. Pte. Massala is very proud of the fact that he fought with the Canadians in France.

and gathered interesting information about the land grants tied to Fairy Lake Island in Stony Lake. Here is an excerpt from William Irwin's 1929 obituary.

The late Mr. Irwin was born in Ballymena, County Antrim, Ireland, in July 1849, and came to Canada at the age of 17 years when he was engaged by the late John Ludgate in the lumbering camps, later becoming foreman and woods manager. He was also employed in a similar capacity with lumbering concerns in Fort Frances and subsequently became contractor for

the taking-out of logs both at the last named place and in the waters tributary to the Georgian Bay.

At the time of his retirement fifteen years ago after a well earned rest the deceased gentleman was connected with the Georgian Bay Lumber Company, Lachine, where he was in charge of the woods operations, and right up to the time of his death he continued to take a keen interest in its many branches.

He had a very extensive acquaintance throughout the Dominion and particularly in Ontario and British Columbia. He was regarded by lumbermen as a careful, prudent and successful operator in taking-out merchantable timber and transporting it to its destination, and was affectionately regarded by all men under his control.

Mr. Irwin married Susan Stewart of this city, who it is learned with regret is at the present time in failing health and is confined to her bed.

We will share other stories later.



## Peterborough Lawn Bowlers 1906

**Peterborough Lawn Bowlers  
Held Their Annual Meeting  
In the Ontario Bank Chambers—Reports of  
President and Secretary Showed Club in  
Flourishing Condition—Bright Prospects  
for This Year—Scotch Bowlers Coming.**

*Morning Times, 19 April 1906*

The annual meeting of the Peterborough Lawn Bowling Club held last night was the largest in the history of that organization. The Ontario Bank chambers, where the bowlers met was crowded and the greatest enthusiasm prevailed throughout. The meeting was in every respect most satisfactory. All the reports presented showed the Club to be in a flourishing condition and the members are only keen to get into the game again. The club's grounds at the Corner of Aylmer and Brock streets are in good shape now and as soon as the roller has been put into use and a few more dry days the lawn, bowlers will be able to get onto the grass. The prospects of the club were never as bright as they are this year. The finances are in good shape and there will undoubtedly be a largely increased membership. With the latter end in view a very strong membership committee was appointed.

Then too the list of trophies for the season are well worth winning and several keen competitions will be seen among the local players.

PRESIDENT S REPORT to the members of the club was as follows;

I am pleased to be permitted to again meet and render a brief account of the stewardship, for the past year. In the language of the life insurance company "it has been the

best yet." True, the executive has had some serious losses early in the season, losing Mr. Whiten. He removed from our city to Rat Portage. He was an ardent and enthusiastic bowler and was very much missed. The executive appointed Mr. J. E. A. Fitzgerald to fill the vacancy caused by Mr. Whiten's removal, and in making this selection they made no mistake, as he is a good executive man and fully alive to the best interests of the club.

The executive also sustained a very serious loss in the removal of Mr. Fred Dixon to China, he was resourceful, honorable, frank and firm and seldom, if ever, wrong in his judgment, he was an exceptionally good executive man and bland and courteous on the

lawn, whether winning or losing, or only an interested spectator.

As instructed, your executive, after interviewing Mr. Hall, had the old fence removed, and have now a new fence erected, in keeping with the grounds. They also, after due consideration, decided to build a new club house, or rather a new store house for the bowls and other accessories. The material was purchased, and most of the work was done by the members after hours, with the result that the building did not cost much, even, though it is not very pretentious.

The spring was backward and delayed the seed and grass from coming up, and the members were a little restless on account of being delayed so long. Particularly, was this the case, and to some extent pardonable, when the days were so inviting, though the grounds were anything but fit to play on.

No record of the games played the past season has been kept, but it is safe to say that the half acre was most popular and afforded more genuine, clean Recreation than other like areas in the city.

There were several complaints about the lights last year and it is thought that some change should be made this season. The Canadian General [Electric] wrote us suggesting a diffusing arc incandescent lamp and, at our suggestion forwarded one on approbation, so that we might be in a position to judge of its merits, as compared to the present system but unfortunately we were unable to get it installed in time to make such a test last fall. This is a matter it would be well to have decided soon. These lamps cost about \$26 each.

We think it would be advisable to add some more efficient means of watering the lawn, as this work has to be done after playing is through for the evening. It is almost too much to ask a man to remain at least an hour afterwards, when it might just as easily be done in half time, were proper appliances provided. It would appear that lighting, caretaking and levelling the grounds properly, will be the principal outlay for the coming season, outside of necessary entertainment should the Old Country bowlers favor us with a visit. On hearing that our country was to be favored with a visit from the Home Bowlers, the executive instructed our secretary to extend an invitation to them to visit our city, although we have not received any acceptance yet.

He was pleased to report that notwithstanding the improvements carried out last season and the deficit of over \$81 at close of last season, the club was now nearly clear

with the world, the liabilities amounting to about \$32. Taking into consideration the assets of the Association they show a surplus of about \$100 over the liabilities.

The president, in conclusion, thanked the secretary treasurer and the members of the executive for the loyal and faithful co-operation in the carrying out of every detail of the work undertaken.

#### FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The secretary treasurer's report was next presented by G. H. Giroux and adopted. The following was his report.

#### SEC.-TREAS. REPORT.

Secretary-Treasurer G. H. Giroux read the financial statement of the club, which showed a balance in favor of the club of over \$100. The report was as follows:—

Total receipts .....\$ 359.60

Total expenditure ..... 349.22

Balance on hand >>— ..... \$ 16.18

#### ASSETS.

To credit in Ontario Bank .....25.35

To balance on hand, Ontario Bank . 10.38

To club house ..... 75.00

Total assets ... .. \$110.78

#### LIABILITIES,

Ontario Bank note .....\$ 25.35

Accounts due ..... 16.50

Total liabilities ..... 41.85

Assets over liabilities, ....., \$68.93.

The above statement does not include the tools, lighting apparatus, hose, etc., which would easily add another \$40 to our assets.

G. H. GIROUX, Sec.-Treas.

#### CLUB'S ADDRESS TO PRESIDENT

To Mr. D. H. Moore, "President of the Peterborough Lawn Bowling Association.

Sir,—If our club is one of the most successful in the city of Peterborough, as well financially as for its good comradeship, the result is largely due to your indefatigable exertions and personal character. You, more than any one individual, have been the means of its present success, not only from the skill with which you have conducted its affairs, but also from the unselfish manner in which you have promoted the enjoyment of your fellow members. There being that feeling and something more tangible to express the same being required, we therefore ask you to accept the accompanying pair of bowls. It is our hope that they will be generally a victorious pair, but kindly disposed as we are to you, it would never do to have you win all the time, but on those rare occasions on which we hope to see you lose, we know the winner will have to work to win.

Signed on behalf of the club, G. H. GIROUX.  
Sec.-Treas. Peterborough, April 18, 1906.

President Moore made a very appropriate reply

in which he heartily thanked his fellow bowlers for their handsome gift and their many kind words of appreciation of his efforts. He said that his only regret was that he was not more worthy of all the nice things which had been said about him. He had tried to do his duty in the post, and this was made easy by his great interest in the game and by the co-operation of his fellow officers and the members of the club generally. The address from the club members to the president was accompanied by an handsome pair of silver top bowls, which were made by John Taylor, Glasgow, the greatest manufacturer of bowls in the world, and were imported by the club.

#### PATRONS AND PATRONESSES.

The following patrons and patronesses were appointed Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Stratton; Mr. and Mrs. R. R. Hall; Mr. and Mrs. James .Kendry; Mr. T. E. Bradburn.

#### OFFICERS ELECTED.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year:

President—Mr. H. D. Moore.

Vice-President—Dr. Greer.

Secretary-Treasurer—Mi. G. H. Giroux.

Auditor—Mr. John Crane .

Executive Committee — Messrs. J. H.

Fitzgerald, R. M Waddell, R. Kerr, Dr. McKercher, Dr. Caldwell, Dr. Geo. Burnham, A. H. Stratton, T. F. Matthews, D. tielfoghem, W. F. Johnson.

Membership Committee—Messrs. G. Medd. W. Mcfroy. C. E. Frost, J. Crane, E. Runnels, J. W. Ferguson, R.Cottrell, R. M. Waddell.

Schedule Committee — Messrs. G. H. Giroux, E. Runnels, R. M. Waddell

#### CLUB TROPHIES.

Mr. Crane presents a pair of bowls to the club for a competition in singles.

Dr. Boucher and Dr. Greer will each give a pair of bowls for a competition in Scotch Doubles.

.Mr. C .E. Frost will contribute a silver cop as a club trophy for competition.

#### SCOTCH CURLERS COMING.

In anticipation of the visit of the Scotch and English bowlers to Ontario this summer, Secretary-Treasurer G. H. Giroux was authorized by the club to communicate with the President of the Ontario/ Bowling Association and extend through him a hearty invitation to the Old Country bowlers to visit Peterborough, the Lift-Look city. There will be six rinks come over the year, and the Peterborough club are most anxious to have them come here. The club is in a splendid condition and will give the visitors a



good time as well a, good game.

*The British Bowlers at Peterborough 1910  
(Peterborough Lawn Bowling Club) At the time the lawn  
bowling club was on Brock Street in what is now the  
Sandford Fleming Park.*

## Peterborough Lawn Bowling Project

The Peterborough Lawn Bowling Club and Trent Valley Archives are working together to share the history of the local club which was founded in 1901. Its first home was at Simcoe and Aylmer. The foregoing article is a good example of the local coverage lawn bowling received and gave Steve Russell and Elwood Jones confidence that good stories could be told.

Steve Russell applied for support from the Trent Co-operative Research Committee for a couple of years and this fall Mitch Parker agreed to do research that would also count towards an academic course.

Trent Valley Archives has the archives of the Peterborough Lawn Bowling Club for 1930 to 2020. The project was defined to fill in the gap from 1901 to 1930. This was possible because the three daily newspapers for those years have been digitized from microfilms and are accessible at [www.archives.org](http://www.archives.org). As well, the pdfs are searchable and so more accessible for researchers. The Morning Times and

The Daily Review ended in 1913 and 1920 respectively, but the Examiner is available at this site to 1947 thanks to a project undertaken by the City Heritage Office in co-operation with the Peterborough Public Library and the Trent Valley Archives.

The current plans are to write stories that are readable and accessible and reflect the history of the club across the 125 years.



TRENT VALLEY ARCHIVES

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*"Without archives there is no history"*

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich



